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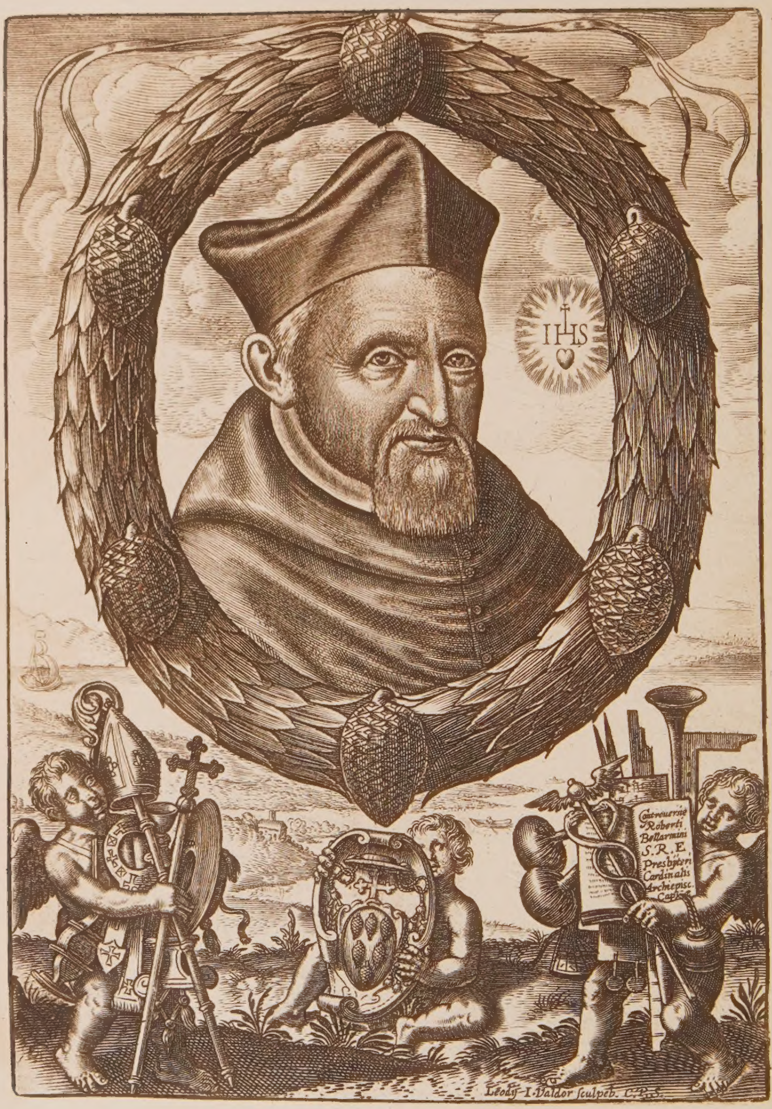
LIFE AND WORK OF
BLESSED ROBERT BELLARMINE

VOL. I


IHS
Controversiae
Roberti
Bellarmini
S.R.E.
Presbyteri
Cardinalis
Archiepisc.
Capuae
Leodij I. Valdor sculpeb. C.P.S.

BLESSED ROBERT BELLARMINE,

From the engraving executed by Valdor, of Liège before 1626.

THE LIFE AND WORK
OF
BLESSED ROBERT FRANCIS CARDINAL BELLARMINE, S.J.
1542—1621

BY

JAMES BRODRICK, S.J.

WITH AN INTRODUCTION BY HIS EMINENCE
CARDINAL EHRLE, S.J.

IN TWO VOLUMES

VOLUME I

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BEATI ROBERTI BELLARMINI
· EXHORTATIONES DOMESTICAE ·
· EXHORTATIO NONA ·
· DE CHARITATE ·

TO THE
DEAR MEMORY
OF NAN
BRAVEST OF SUFFERERS

INTRODUCTION

BY HIS EMINENCE CARDINAL EHRLE

As a member of the German Province of the Society of Jesus, vhich when exiled in 1871 was so charitably helped by the nglish Province, it gives me great pleasure, though over-urdened with urgent work, to write a few lines of introduction o these excellent volumes that constitute the first adequate ccount in the English language of a great and saintly man to vhom the suffering Church in England during the sad centuries f persecution was deeply indebted.

My first knowledge of Blessed Robert Bellarmine dates from he time when I was a novice of the Society of Jesus at Gorheim, n 1861. It was the custom in our novitiate on feast days to ead in the refectory some of the Latin sermons which he reached before the students and professors of Louvain niversity, as well as a multitude of other auditors, from the ear 1569 onwards. When he began these courses, he was ot twenty-seven years old nor a priest, but his character is lready evident in them. It is the type of character that is till to be met with in the little towns of southern Tuscany, imple, kindly and courteous, with nothing in it of the ‘ Ro-nana grandezza ’ which may be discerned even in the most rdinary people of the Eternal City. Entirely absent from it, oo, is the somewhat commercial spirit that, according to eport, makes other Tuscans careful of every copper. In ddition to these attractive features in their character, the enerous, open-hearted men and women of Blessed Robert's ative country-side have always been conspicuous for their harp and ready wits and for their ability to communicate their houghts in a lucid and arresting form.

Robert himself came into the world endowed in a special measure with the traits of his people. His nature, candid as the Tuscan skies, was peculiarly sensitive to the appeal of generous ideals, and with these he was brought into daily contact in the thoroughly Christian atmosphere of his home and native town. When in due course the time arrived for him to decide about his vocation in life, he was given the grace to make the election in the light of the eternal principles on which St. Ignatius had based his marvellous book, the *Spiritual Exercises*. It is easy to imagine how its great meditations, ‘The Kingdom of Christ’ and ‘On Two Standards,’ must have burned themselves into the soul of a mettlesome, high-spirited boy who had in his veins the blood of a people famous in Italian history for their heroism.

He was one who could not do anything by halves, for his mind worked naturally according to a certain ruthlessness of logic that made compromise impossible once the truth was clearly seen. If his character had to be summed up in two words the most apt would be ‘utter sincerity’. The first principle and foundation of the *Spiritual Exercises* put before him the great premiss that man was created to praise, reverence, and serve God our Lord, and by this means to save his soul, and that the other things on the face of the earth were created for man's sake, in order to aid him in the prosecution of his appointed end. To Robert's unspoilt nature and clear, undimmed intelligence the conclusion drawn by St. Ignatius came like a flash of lightning that fused every instinct and impulse of his heart into one great resolve. He would devote his life and all his forces to the service of Him whose gift they were, and would strive ‘to make himself indifferent to all created things in such sort as not to wish for health rather than sickness, for wealth rather than poverty, for honour rather than dishonour, for a long life rather than a short one’.

It is not my task to show in detail how he lived out the resolve of his boyhood through nearly two-thirds of a century, how it inspired his incessant activities, mastered every obstacle including continual bad health, and brought his extraordinary gifts of nature and grace totally into the service of his Divine Master. This is done fully in the excellent volumes which these lines introduce. Hence I venture only to add a few words in further explanation of the national or rather provincial character of the great and saintly Cardinal.

The candour and ingenuousness with which he opened his heart in many of his numberless letters, and, above all, in the autobiographical notes which he wrote at the suggestion of Father Mutius Vitelleschi, proved of real value to certain *Promotores Fidei* or, as they are popularly known, 'Devil's Advocates', in the various processes of his beatification, but, as will be seen in the concluding chapters of the present work, the great canonist Prosper Lambertini, who became Pope Benedict XIV, did not consider that Blessed Robert's artless, child-like way of speaking out his thoughts was in the least a genuine objection against his heroism in the service of God. Anyone who gives a little thought to the matter and who has some acquaintance with the homely, simple-hearted people of southern Tuscany, will soon understand that the Cardinal's refreshing and oftentimes delightful candour of speech was due in large measure to his provincial character. Though he lived so long in Rome he kept his Tuscan heart to the end, a straightforward, boyish kind of heart whose exuberance was something very different from vulgar vanity. I can speak from experience as I have known personally a highly gifted man with just such a character, for some twenty years. Blessed Robert, being aware that his whole heart had always been in the hands of God and that the service of God was his only aim, could not see any reason for concealing matters that might prove useful to his neighbour, especially as he had been urgently requested to tell them and naturally supposed that whatever he might say would be used with due discretion.

How completely he spent his energies and splendid talents in the service of the Church, a glance at the analytical index to these volumes will make plain. Rarely indeed are capacities such as he possessed for government, for administration, for teaching and preaching, for writing, and for the direction of souls, to be found combined in one man. He was the orator of universities and of the Papal Court, professor of almost every branch of theology, consultor of the majority of the Roman Congregations and of a Papal Legate, rector of the most important college of the Society of Jesus and superior of one of its largest provinces, Archbishop of Capua and for twenty-two years a Cardinal.

There was scarcely a single important ecclesiastical affair of his age in which he did not take a leading part, the struggle with heresy, the reform of the Calendar and Breviary, the revision of the Vulgate under Sixtus V and Clement VIII, the great controversy between the Dominicans and Jesuits about efficacious grace, the interdict pronounced against the Republic of Venice, the assault of King James of England and his theologians on the temporal prerogatives of the Holy See, the events leading up to the first trial of Galileo—these were but some of the more prominent.

Whenever the Church needed a defender he was the first to come to her defence. He was always in the front trenches, always armed and vigilant, always ready to provide for the emergencies and requirements of the moment. Thus, with infinite labour, he wrote his celebrated 'Controversies' at the time when the demand for them was most urgent, and thus, some years later, he composed his hardly less celebrated Catechism to make secure for the children of his native land the precious heritage of their Catholic faith.

His extraordinarily versatile intellect was as well adapted for the most subtle scholastic speculation as for the historical and philological research which was so badly needed at a time when the reformers professed to borrow their chief arguments against the Church from the domain of positive theology. That his zeal was no less catholic than his scholarship is evident, to mention only one example, from the interest and active part which he took in all the efforts made during his life-time to bring about the reunion with the Catholic Church of the Chaldeans of Mosul, the Ruthenians of Poland and Lithuania, the Greek Patriarchs of Constantinople, the Malabar Christians in India, and the Slavs of the Balkans. It was obviously impossible for the author of the present work to deal minutely, in the space at his disposal, with all such questions, but it will be found that when unable to do so he gives ample references to sources, as, in this matter of reunion, to the valuable brochure, *Il Beato Bellarmino e gli Orientali*, published as recently as March 1927 by George Hofmann, S.J., professor of church history at the Oriental Institute, Rome.

Blessed Robert's personal charm which drew to him such hosts of friends, his compassion with every form of suffering, his boundless charity to the poor and distressed, are all fully described in the following pages, so there is no need for me to dwell upon them here. *Dilectus Deo et hominibus*, he provides an almost perfect example of a truly lovable saint in whom the finest and fairest qualities of our human nature received an added attractiveness from their permeation by the sweet influences of divine grace. It is not only his zeal that is an inspiration for us, but the manner in which his zeal was shown. He was the most courteous and cheerful of saints, full of little jokes and fond of a laugh, even though he practised the strictest asceticism. His life has lessons for everybody, for learned and unlearned alike. Some of the following pages must inevitably prove difficult reading owing to the abstruseness of the matters that had to be discussed, but by far the larger part of the work will be found to have a universal appeal because it is concerned with one of the most fascinating characters in the annals of Christian sanctity. A little study of the very old and admirable portrait that forms the frontispiece to the first of these volumes is almost enough by itself to capture a man's sympathies for the one whose genial features it reflects.

Before concluding my few words of introduction to this work, which has my warmest good wishes, I would make bold to ask its readers to say a little prayer that through the intercession of Blessed Robert God may grant me, an old man of eighty-two, to make even now in the late evening of life such a generous resolution as he made in its morning and kept so wonderfully until the close of the long and weary day.

Francis Card. Ehrle S.J.

PREFACE

In the earliest-known life of St. Patrick, written by Muirchu in the seventh century, the following story is told: ‘ There was in the country of Airthir [Co. Armagh] a certain rich and honourable man named Daire. . . . Daire came to pay his respects to St. Patrick, bringing with him a wonderful bronze pot holding three gallons, that had come from beyond the seas. And Daire said to the Saint, Lo, this bronze pot is for thee. And St. Patrick said *Grazacham.* And when Daire returned to his own house, he said, That is a stupid man, who said nothing more civil than *Grazacham* in return for a wonderful bronze three-gallon pot. And Daire then proceeded to say to his servants, Go, and bring us back our pot. So they went and said to Patrick, We are going to take away the pot. Nevertheless, St. Patrick that time too said, *Grazacham*, Take it away. And they took it away. And Daire questioned his companions and said, What did the Christian say when ye took back the pot ? And they answered, He just said *Grazacham.* Daire answered and said, *Grazacham*, when it is given ! *Grazacham*, when it is taken away ! his expression is so good that his pot must be brought back again to him with his *Grazacham* ’ (Dr. Newport White's translation).

St. Patrick's *Grazacham*, a hurried pronunciation of the *Gratias agamus* or ‘ Let us give thanks ’ of the Preface in the Mass, is the very word for this preface too. Its writer would like, in the first place, to express his deep gratitude to the venerable and illustrious scholar whom Oxford University delighted to honour nearly thirty years ago, for the great kindness that prompted him in extreme old age and amid the press of exacting duties to write an introduction for these volumes. In the sixteenth century, Blessed Robert Bellarmine's uncle, Cardinal Marcello Cervini, did learned men and students a service that will always keep his name in honoured remembrance by re-organizing and increasing the treasures of the Vatican Library. The good work then begun was advanced in the nineteenth century to a stage beyond anything that had hitherto been attempted or even contemplated, by Marcello Cervini's successor, Father Francis Ehrle, S.J., now His Eminence Cardinal Ehrle.

Another true scholar, without whose devoted labours the present work could not have been written at all, was the late Father F. X. Le Bachelet, S.J. During his long and active career as a professor of theology, Father Le Bachelet published volume after volume of documents relating to Blessed Robert Bellarmine, all edited with the most scrupulous and loving care. How much the following pages owe to him may be seen by merely glancing at the foot-notes. It was a real tragedy that he should have died before being able to write the authoritative and definitive biography of the great Cardinal who had so fascinated him, and about whom he knew more than did anybody else in the world.

If all the generous friends who helped in the making of the present biography, which does not in the least pretend to be either authoritative or final, were to be mentioned, St. Patrick's laconic *Grazacham* would become the response in a litany. They are unnamed by their own request, and to each the author would like here and now to tender his sincerest thanks. Even without their permission, however, he cannot refrain from recording his immense indebtedness to Father Joseph Welsby, Father Henry Keane, Father William Bodkin, and Father Joseph Keating, of the Society of Jesus. The Rev. James O'Carroll, S.J., gave ungrudgingly time which he could ill spare to the thankless task of drawing up the index, and Brother John Griffin, S.J., Director of the Manresa Press, Roehampton, though not the printer of the work, bore practically all the responsibility of seeing it through its various stages from the author's desk to the publishers' shelves. Only the author knows how much he had to endure—from the author. Blessed Robert Bellarmine said some hard things about printers and their go-betweens, but his verdict on the profession would have been very different had he had the good fortune of dealing with such a courteous and competent firm as Messrs. Butler and Tanner Ltd., of Frome, and with such a truly helpful, patient, unfailingly cheerful agent as the Director of the Manresa Press. How much these volumes owe to Brother John Griffin it would take a third volume to tell, so the writer has to be content with saying 'nothing more civil' than *Grazacham* for a world of kindness. But it is said from the bottom of his heart.

The only English account of Bellarmine hitherto published in book form was put together seventy years ago by a Doctor of Divinity named Rule. Rule also gave the world *The Brand of Dominic, or the Inquisition*; *Savonarola, or the Dawn of the Reformation*, and a few other pieces of that kind for the edification of the Protestant conscience. The modern biographies of the great Cardinal in continental languages are largely adaptations of the old works of Fuligatti and Bartoli. These men were conscientious writers, but they followed methods that are no longer esteemed. Somehow Blessed Robert is on stilts in their pages, or hampered in his natural gait by the ceremonies with which they surround him. The aim of this book is to present him in homelier terms, for he can afford better than most great men to be talked about quite simply. Simplicity, in the noblest sense of the word, was one of the chief traits of his character, a point not forgotten in the liturgy of his very beautiful Mass.

Again, it would be doing him but an equivocal sort of honour to leave the smiles out of his story. He was Tuscan-born, a child of the

> Bel paese là dove il *Si* suona,

and one of the things his friends noticed particularly about him was that he found it difficult to be stiff or solemn. Camus, the Boswell of St. Francis de Sales, knew Bellarmine and described him as being 'd'humeur forte gaye', a pleasant fact that will perhaps be allowed as an excuse for any less sedate or formal moods to which the prose of these pages may succumb.

The numerous notes and references in them are given because it is the writer's fancy that they ought to be given. Great men with established reputations may reasonably omit such guarantees, if they so wish, but lesser people surely have a duty to provide them. In spite of their presence, this work does not claim to be anything grander than a more or less popular biography, accurate as far as it goes, and written in hopes of winning a niche in Catholic affections for one who deserves it if ever a man did.

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CHAPTER I

THE THINGS OF A CHILD

Italian towns, it has been said, are of two kinds, big ones with small names and small ones with big names. Conspicuous in the second class is Montepulciano, the little hill-city in Tuscany where Robert Bellarmine came into the world nearly four centuries ago. There are only eight thousand people inside its grey walls and they form one of the most secluded and inaccessible communities on the face of the earth. Trains, to be sure, puff hopefully into a station labelled 'Montepulciano,' but that label is a gross exaggeration. Montepulciano is miles and miles away, on the top of a mountain. The only wise way to approach the shy city is by the Roman road from Siena, a road that spirals like the strip on a barber's pole, and reveals at each turn some new phase of the magic of Tuscany, grim, gay, beautiful or forlorn. All these adjectives apply to Montepulciano. Seen from the heights beyond Pienza, the town looks literally as though 'coming down out of Heaven from God, a bride adorned,' but a nearer view shows a stark, forbidding fortress, instead of a city of peace. A man going there to find comfort and beauty of the conventional order would be certainly astray. Montepulciano had no time to bother about her looks, for during the entire medieval period all her energies had been needed to keep stones upon stones. Her history was tragedy from beginning to end. Both Florence and Siena coveted her possession and, being only a baby among cities, she had had no chance when those mighty rivals went to war. The fiercest fights of Guelf and Ghibelline were to decide who should own the lordly heights on which she stood.[1] When she fell to Florence, Siena's battle-cry became 'Remember Montepulciano!' and when she fell to Siena, Florence flooded Tuscany with wild Germans and

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[1] E. Gardner, *The Story of Siena*, p. 67.

Englishmen to try and get her back. No town in Italy was so often attacked and plundered, and few little towns in the world have put up so gallant and tireless a fight for the freedom that never came, or came only as a brief parenthesis between disasters. It is not strange, then, that Montepulciano should look grim within her ramparts, ' un véritable bijou de guerre.'[1]

Cradled in all these heroic and spirited memories, her sons could not fail to grow in soul like the city that bore them. And it was not only brave memories that moulded their thoughts. Mere living becomes an ascetic venture when pitched so near the clouds, with the snow-capped Apennines for its horizon. People nursed in such a place must either develop a philosophy of cheerfulness or go mad, and they chose to be cheerful. They are not demonstrative, they do not talk much, and they shrug their shoulders often. ' It will all be the same in a hundred years,' is written on their faces. But they sing a great deal to themselves, they are extremely good-natured, friendly, and tolerant, and they love God, bonfires, jokes, and children. Reading and study do not appeal to them much and there is not a single book-shop in their town.

Though that town is most eloquent of war, there is many a gentler sermon in its stones. Paul Bourget found enchantment in the street. ' All the streets of Montepulciano,' he wrote, ' breathe the potent and melancholy fascination of the past.'[2] The first object that meets the visitor's eye, as he comes in through the cavernous main gate, is the Marzocco or Lion of Florence, rampant on a pillar. There he has stood for centuries in the middle of the street and, however much he may incommode the traffic on market days, no town-council would dare to lay a sacrilegious finger on him. Hard by is an inn bearing his name where one may sample the famous wine of Montepulciano[3] and have beans for dessert.

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[1] P. Bourget, *Sensations d'Italie : Montepulciano.*

[2] The late Mr. Maurice Hewlett was disgusted with Montepulciano and denounced it for all he was worth in his delightful book *The Road in Tuscany* (Vol. II, ch. xii). He liked its small neighbour San Quirico, though, because ' it prospers and has an English air,' not to speak of ' a commodious inn with flowers in its balconies, where one lives wondrous well ' (p. 258).

[3] The poet Redi has celebrated this vintage in some stirring verses :

Fill, fill, let us all have our will
But with *what*, with *what*, boys, shall we fill ?
Sweet Ariadne—no, not *that* one—*ah* no ;
Fill me the manna of Montepulciano :
Fill me a magnum and reach it me. Gods !
How it glides to my heart by the sweetest of roads !

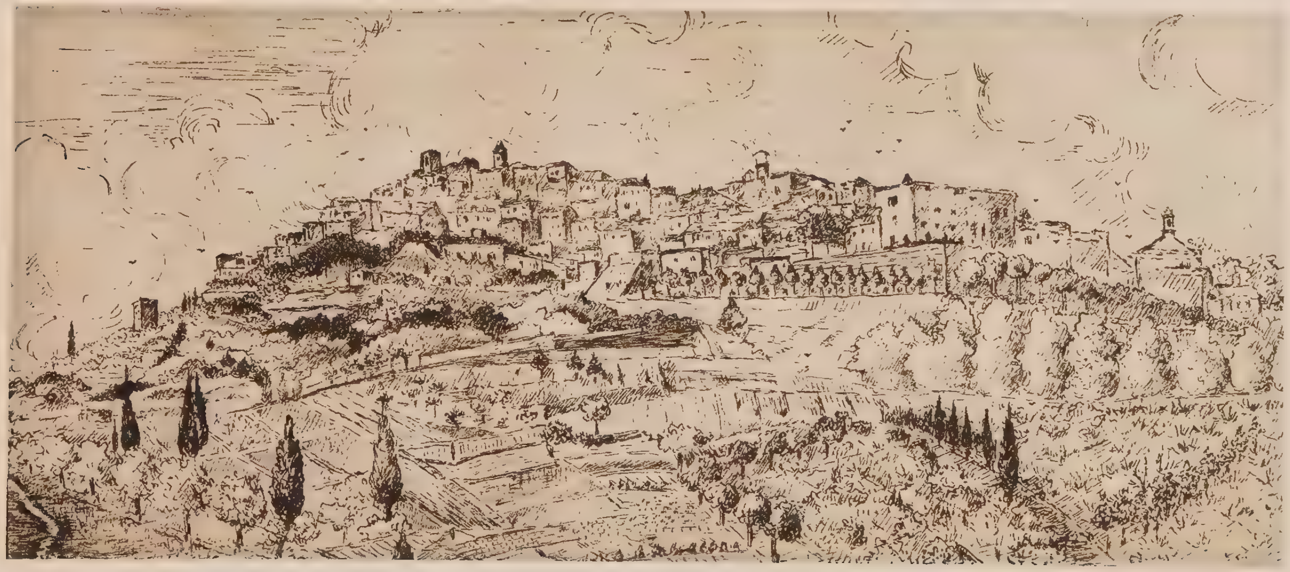
The main street, now for its sins called the Via Garibaldi, climbs steeply up the hill, each little *vicolo* on the way framing an exquisite glimpse of valley and mountains. Angelo Cini, the morning-star of the Italian Renaissance, was born in this street. Angelo went to Florence at the age of ten to join the household of Lorenzo the Magnificent, but he did not forget his native city when he became famous. The Latin name of the place is Mons Politianus, so he rechristened himself Politian, and has been known ever since in history as 'The Man from Montepulciano.' This strong devotion to their *Patria*, as they liked to call it, was a marked feature in the character of Politian's fellow-citizens, and Robert Bellarmine, too, when he grew up and became famous, used to sign his big books proudly: 'Robertus Cardinalis Bellarminus, Politianus.' The house where he was born is further up the hill, past many a wonderful, brown palace of which Florence herself might make a boast. It is a tenement now, and the honest families who live in it hang out their multi-coloured washing on the fine double loggia of its courtyard. A lazy Tuscan cat dreams there in the shade till roused by the singing of some woman who comes to draw water from the ancient well. She has to use a windlass and, her task done, goes back by a worn stairway to one of the seventeen rooms within. Seen from outside, in the Via Ricci, the house has still a certain pathetic dignity, like an aristocrat in rags. Two shields hang forlornly on the walls, bearing the Bellarmine arms—gules with six falling pine-cones d'or. Both the gules and the gold have, of course, been washed away long ago. Montepulciano is full of such shields, for family glory was the great foible of its people. According to an old story, everybody born up there was a nobleman. The story is that when the neighbouring city of Chiusi (Etruscan Clusium) was burned during the barbarian invasions its nobles and commoners, who had never got on well together, decided to part company.

Oh, how it tickles me, kisses me, bites me!
Oh, how my eyes loosen sweetly in tears!
I'm ravished! I'm rapt! Heaven finds me admissible!
Lost in an ecstasy! Blinded! Invisible!
Hearken all earth!
We, Bacchus, in the might of our great mirth,
To all who reverence us are right thinkers;
Hear, all ye drinkers!
Give ear and give faith to the edict divine;
Montepulciano's the King of all wine.
Bacchus in Tuscany. Leigh Hunt's translation.

The commoners took up their abode on a hill to the south of Chiusi, which was called, in consequence, *Castrum Plebis*, and is now known as Città della Pieve. *Mons Politicus* or Mons Politianus was the name given to the northern height, where the nobles retired, and that is why there are so many shields in Montepulciano.

The Via Ricci leads down hill to the Piazza, on which stand the Duomo and Palazzo Publico. This latter building is a replica of the historic one in Florence, and has a central tower up which a visitor may crawl on hands and knees to a height of two thousand feet above the sea. Then the reward of his daring is perhaps the finest prospect obtainable on earth. Words are a poor medium through which to express its beauty, but here, for what it is worth, is one attempt that has been made :

> The charm of this view is composed of so many different elements, so subtly blent, appealing to so many separate sensibilities ; the sense of grandeur, the sense of space, the sense of natural beauty, and the sense of human pathos ; that deep internal faculty we call historic sense ; that it cannot be defined. First comes the immense surrounding space—a space measured in each arc of the circumference by sections of at least fifty miles, limited by points of exquisitely picturesque beauty, including distant cloud-like mountain ranges and crystals of sky-blue Apennines, circumscribing landscapes of refined loveliness in detail, always varied, always marked by objects of peculiar interest where the eye or memory may linger. Next in importance to this immensity of space, so powerfully affecting the imagination by its mere extent, and by the breadth of atmosphere attuning all varieties of form and colour to one harmony beneath illimitable heaven, may be reckoned the episodes of rivers, lakes, hills, cities with old historic names. For there spreads the lordly length of Thrasymene islanded and citadelled, in hazy morning mist, still dreaming of the shock of Roman hosts with Carthaginian legions. There is the lake of Chiusi, set like a jewel underneath the copse-clad hills which hide the dust of a dead Tuscan nation. The streams of Arno start far, far away, where Arezzo lies enfolded in bare uplands. And there at our feet rolls Tiber's largest affluent, the Chiana. . . . The heights of Casentino, the Perugian uplands, Volterra, far withdrawn amid a wilderness of rolling hills, and solemn snow-touched ranges of the Spolentino, Sibyl-haunted fastnesses of Norcia, form the most distant horizon-lines of this unending panorama. And then there are the cities, placed each upon a point of vantage : Siena ; olive-mantled Chiusi ; Cortona, white upon her spreading throne ; poetic Montalcino, lifted aloft against the vaporous sky ; San



MONTEPULCIANO.

Quirico, nestling in pastoral tranquillity; Pienza, where Aeneas Sylvius built palaces and called his birthplace after his own Papal name. Still closer to the town itself of Montepulciano, stretching along the irregular ridge which gave it building ground, and trending out on spurs above deep orchards, come the lovely details of oak-copses, blending with grey tilth and fields rich with olive and vine. . . .[1]

One other town we must add to the list given in this passage, though it is shut off by a range of hills. About forty miles away, over the reeds of Thrasymene, stands Assisi.

2. There is a portrait gallery of Montepulciano's famous sons in the Palazzo Publico, and that, except for an occasional tablet on the walls of houses, is about the only honour she does them. To have produced two Popes, twelve cardinals, thirty-two bishops, and three such famous characters as Angelo Cini, Robert de Nobili, and Robert Bellarmine, all in the space of a century, from a population of scarcely four thousand, was no mean feat, but Montepulciano is not in the least conceited about it. She takes her great men lightly, as she takes everything else, including her troubles, and the only one she is ready to boast about is Santa Agnese, the medieval Dominican nun whose shrine St. Catherine and St. Francis used to visit. The goodness of the people of this extraordinary little city used to be a proverb in olden times. They were too few to make history but they did a nobler thing, they endured its buffetings without ever losing their courage or unworldliness. Had Robert Bellarmine been born elsewhere he could hardly have been the same man. He owed a great deal to his native town and he loved it passionately. The traditions of the place, the fighting spirit so evident in its scarred and battered memorials, the practical homely goodness of its men and women, their reticence about personal concerns, their *bonhomie* and patient unpretentious courage, are all plainly distinguishable in his character, and so, too, are the hereditary traits of his race.

His family, which has been traced back to the thirteenth century, had three branches, to the second of which Robert belonged. How the name Bellarmine originated is not known. The earliest ancestor of whom there is record was a certain Pino, who may have been responsible for the pine-cones on the family crest. People have said that Robert was of noble blood in the technical sense, but his family is not mentioned in the histories of the Tuscan aristocracy (e.g. in Gamurri's, published in 1688), and when King James of England scorned him for his 'mean birth' he readily admitted the charge, as will be seen in a later chapter. Noble or not, though, the Bellarmini were an old and distinguished race. Robert's forefathers had often held the highest posts in their native town, and beyond its borders they figured a good deal in the Papal service as nuncios or secretaries. Soldiering was a great habit of theirs, too, as it was of the families into which they married. Robert's great-grandfather, Michael-Angelo Tarugi, was Chancellor of Florence in the palmiest days of the Republic and had for brother-in-law the famous Politian himself. His nephew, another Michael-Angelo, became renowned in the administration of four successive Popes and was the father of Cardinal Francesco Tarugi, who helped St. Philip Neri to found the Oratory.

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[1] J. A. Symonds, *Sketches in Italy*, pp. 61–63.

Two other distinguished families of Montepulciano, the Benci and Cervini, also contributed to the blood that ran in Robert's veins. Each of these three stocks from which he sprang numbered a *Beato* in its ranks, a fact which gives us a little hint of the type of people they were.[1] The Cervini were those most closely related to him. Marcello Cervini, one of the noblest figures in Papal history, was Robert's uncle, and round him were centred the main influences that bore on his nephew's early life. Never were influences more benign. It is tempting to linger here on a character so strong and beautiful as Marcello's, but Pastor has recently devoted so many glowing pages to his life-story that the digression would be an impertinence.[2] He was great in so many ways, great in holiness, great in learning, great in administration, great in generosity. When, after his triumphant career as nuncio, bishop, cardinal, and president of the Council of Trent, he was elected Pope in 1555, the Catholic world thanked God for giving them at last the man who would save Israel. But Heaven's economies are dark. After a brief three-weeks' reign, full of golden promise, Marcello died, one of church history's greatest Might-have-beens. His name lives still, thanks to the magic of Palestrina's art. It will often recur in these pages, for the Saints are great plagiarists and much of the inspiration of Robert Bellarmine's noble life came undoubtedly from his uncle's figure, 'slight and wasted, with a pale, serious countenance, framed by a long black beard.'

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[1] X. M. Le Bachelet, *Bellarmin avant son Cardinalat :* Correspondance et Documents. Paris, 1911, pp. 468–479. Père Le Bachelet here traces the family history in detail.

[2] History of the Popes, Eng. tr. XIV, pp. 1–55.

3. Some time after the death of Marcello Cervini's mother in 1509, his father Riccardo married again, and had by this second union two boys, and five girls whose names make a little melody—Celia, Julia, Cynthia, Sylvia, Elisabetta. In 1534, the father and mother of this big family were both dead, and the care of it devolved upon Marcello as the eldest son. Like the good brother he was, he did everything in his power for the young people, but the future of his sisters caused him a great deal of anxiety. He was better skilled in finding manuscripts than in finding husbands, and turned for advice to the Signora Maria of the Bellarmine family, who was his relative, and a lady with much experience of these delicate negotiations. As she had sons to settle she was very sympathetic, and the pair began a little quiet matchmaking. The plan was that Maria's son Vincenzo, a fine young fellow of twenty-four, should take Marcello's sister Cynthia for his bride.[1] Cynthia was only a little girl of twelve, but marriage at that age was common enough in southern lands. If ever a marriage was made in Heaven, it was this. All Marcello's thoughts about it turned to prayers. 'I have left my mind in peace on the matter,' he wrote in 1537, 'only praying God to allow what He sees to be best. Tell me what you think, so that if this step is designed by Heaven it may not be frustrated by any hesitation on your part or on mine. . . . And please look upon me as if I were a third party, and as much a brother to you as to my father's daughter.'

In the following year, 1538, the marriage took place, and Vincenzo brought his girl-bride home to the great, gloomy-looking house near the Piazza where many generations of Bellarmines had lived and died. There, on the feast of St. Francis, 4 October 1542, their third son was born, two years after the birth of the Society of Jesus in Rome. An old friend of the family, Cardinal Robert Pucci, stood sponsor at the baby's baptism, and it was in his honour that the child was given his first name. His second name could not possibly have been anything but Francis, with the breezes from Assisi blowing in at the windows. Finally, he was called Romolo after a distinguished uncle, and because the Italians of the

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[1] M. U. Bicci, *Notizia della famiglia Boccapaduli*, Rome, 1762, p. 377.

Renaissance liked to sign themselves classically.[1] The rest of this book will show how much his birthday and his second name were to mean to Robert Bellarmine. At first sight, he, the scholar in princely purple, might not seem to have much in common with a man who went clothed in rags and knew nothing about texts. Still, Francis for him was not a mere label that distinguished him from the rest of the world but a kind of star by which he piloted his soul. It would not be too much to say that the thought of the Poor Man of Assisi haunted him. When reading his spiritual books, one is astonished by the constant intrusions of St. Francis, and so like this beloved patron did he grow in soul that the observant Roman populace christened him in his old age, 'il nuovo Poverello.'

As the years went by, more and more brothers and sisters joined Robert in his nursery. His father Vincenzo had never been well-to-do, and the arrival of five boys and seven girls did not lessen his difficulties. Indeed, it would seem that he was often in dire straits, and so his little son made early acquaintance with the Lady Poverty to whom he was afterwards to vow such joyful allegiance. 'I was born a poor gentleman,' he said in his old age to Pope Paul V. Vincenzo, at this time, was gonfalonier or chief magistrate of Montepulciano, an honourable post, but largely honorary too, and so a hindrance rather than a help to worldly prosperity. Probably he kept vineyards to eke out his meagre income, and probably in that uncertain climate the vines often disappointed him. 'Times are so bad and expenses so great,' he writes to his brother-in-law in 1556, 'that I think I should have despaired had not God in His mercy come to my aid. . . . May He help us, for other help we have none.'[2]

Old traditions say that Vincenzo was the man in Montepulciano easiest to find, as when not at home he was always either before the Blessed Sacrament or at his office in the town-hall.[3] Like the rest of his family, he was very quiet and reserved in disposition. The letters which he left reveal little of him besides the fact that he was a very upright man, and had the family ambitions common to his class. The pride of old Rome was still at work in the world, and a good man's first thought was to give his children the chance of climbing higher in the social scale than he had been able to do. It is a restricted ideal, but noble as far as it goes. In Vincenzo's case it did not go far enough, and led in the end to domestic wars.

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[1] Among Bellarmine's immediate kinsfolk there was a Marius, a Caesar, a Fabius, a Livia, an Octavius, a Flamminia, a Sallust, a Virgil, and a Mark Antony.

[2] Le Bachelet, *Bellarmin avant son Cardinalat*, p. 52. The letters in this collection contain several references to the embarrassments in which Robert's father found himself; cf. pp. 21, 27, 29.

[3] D. Bartoli, *Della Vita di Roberto Cardinal Bellarmino*, Naples, 1739, p. 11. This biography, by one who became a Jesuit only two years after Bellarmine's death, was first published in Rome in 1678.

Cynthia, his young wife, was of a very different mould. She had an arithmetic of her own, and visions of plain gold *scudi* were never able to tie up her devotion or dim the long, sweet, heavenly perspective of her plans. To do the will of God was the only ambition she knew. Only sixteen when her son Robert was born, this attractive little lady possessed even then the grave quiet ways and mature judgment of a woman three times her years. Being herself one of a large family, her housekeeping instincts had had lots of scope, and she had her beloved Marcello to turn to whenever her girlish inexperience was perplexed. He wrote to her often after her marriage, only the briefest of notes indeed, but notes full of love and affectionate concern. 'Cynthia, dearest, be sure you keep well and be good and kind to everyone'; 'Darling Cynthia, may God make you a happy mother, and help you to bring up your little ones in His love and fear.'[1] That was how they ran. The place she held in the heart of her boy Robert may easily be guessed. When old and very famous, he was persuaded to set down the main events of his long, crowded life in the document which masquerades as an autobiography. It contains only forty-eight paragraphs, and the first of these he devoted entirely to the praises of his mother. 'To help the poor,' he says, 'was her passion, and she gave herself up whole-heartedly to prayer and contemplation, fasting and austerities. . . . She brought up her sons in the love of God, and used to bid the three eldest, of whom I was the third, to go about together and not mix with the other boys. She sent them to the church near home every day that they might pray before the Blessed Sacrament. And she accustomed them, early on, to make their confessions, to hear Mass, and to practise devotions.'[2] By those who knew her well Cynthia was regarded as 'una donna santissima.'[1] The ordinary crosses which God sent her in such abundance were not enough for her valiant heart and behind the scenes she practised terrible austerities.[2] Robert himself says plainly that her early death was the direct result of her excessive penances. She appears in the few letters of hers which have survived as somewhat like the noble matrons of ancient Rome, devoted, fond of seclusion, and a little stern. But it was only to herself she was hard. Though poor, she was the Lady Bountiful of Montepulciano, and the deep, wise love in which she folded each hour of her children's lives is made plain enough by their subsequent history.

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[1] Bicci, *Notizia della famiglia Boccapaduli*, pp. 374-375.

[2] *Autobiography*, n. i. In 1887, the German scholars Dôllinger and Reusch published an annotated edition of this famous little document. Their notes contain much useful information but are marred by anti-papal prejudice. By far the best edition is that given in Le Bachelet's *Bellarmin*

The childhood of Robert is misty like the mountains that closed it in. Only now and then is there a break through which we catch a glimpse of him. Once when a little fellow of three, he is said to have disturbed the sermon in church by crying out suddenly, 'Mamma, I'm a Cardinal! I'm a Cardinal!' The good men who wrote his life long ago drew the inevitable moral of the story. *Ex ore infantium*—here was authentic prophecy.[3] Perhaps it was, but it is pleasanter and more likely to think that it was just the summer sun streaming through St. Jerome's scarlet robes in the stained-glass window of Santa Maria. Robert was probably fascinated by the resplendent Jerome in his tasselled hat. Like any other small boy, he would be interested in the red beams that washed towards him along the floor, and when, one morning, he found them pouring over himself until he was magnificently incarnadined, it was very natural that he should tug his mother's sleeve and cry, 'Mamma, look, I'm a Cardinal!'

The old biographers relate, too, as something wonderful, how he loved when young to play the priest and say Mass in the nursery for his brothers and sisters. But that was no more significant than the engine-driving proclivities of modern small boys. Indeed, it was the most natural thing possible

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avant son Cardinalat, pp. 442–466. Bellarmine writes of himself throughout in the third person, using the initial N., but we shall occasionally take the liberty of translating his narrative in the first person. He wrote it at the entreaty of two close friends and never dreamt that it would be published after his death. In a later chapter, many further details will be given about the document.

[1] Process of Bellarmine's Beatification, Rome, 1712, *Summarium*, n. 1, p. 2.

[2] G. Fuligatti, *Vita di Roberto Card. Bellarmino*, Rome, 1644, p. 8. First edition, Rome, 1623. Fuligatti knew Bellarmine personally.

[3] Fuligatti, *l.c.*, p. 19.

in a family so ecclesiastically-minded as Robert's, where bishops and cardinals must have been a common theme at table and around the fire. There was, however, one feature of his mimic ministry which certainly gave a hint of future developments. When about five or six years old, he used frequently to climb on an upturned box and preach to the rest of the house with great gusto. Afterwards, as will be seen, he became one of the most popular preachers of his century.[1]

But all was not solemn and serious in his young life. He was an eager and impressionable child, with sharp Tuscan wits that missed nothing of the colour of life, so vivid in his native land. One of the latest memories of his old age was about the great day when his uncle, Cardinal Cervini, paid a state visit to Montepulciano. Like every real boy since the world began, he loved pageantry. ‘ All the day long,’ he wrote in 1617, seventy years after the event, ‘ the bells of the palaces and the church were a-ringing. And in the evening there were fireworks and torchlight games amid great booming and thundering of cannon.’ His enjoyment of these recollections is obvious, and he inquires eagerly whether a similar ceremony, which had taken place shortly before he wrote, was as grand. Did this other Cardinal make his entrance with pomp of cope and mitre, and how was his horse caparisoned ?[2] Each Sunday during Marcello's stay, his little nephews were taken to visit him, a great treat which had to be paid for by being as good as gold. The boys, all agog with excitement, were carefully drilled in the elaborate rubrics of such interviews and, while their wonderful uncle dined, stood mute and awe-struck behind his chair. Then they were presented to him in turn to kiss his magnificent ring and get his blessing.

In 1547, another visitor came to the town, who was destined in the providence of God to give Robert's life its eventual and lasting trend. This was Paschase Broët, the young Frenchman whom St. Ignatius used to call his ‘ Angel ’ because of the shining qualities of his soul. Father Paschase had only to wish a man good-day to make him a disciple, so captivating was the atmosphere of Heaven which he carried about him. At this time, he was quite broken in health and prematurely worn out by his heroic missionary work in Ireland and Italy. When St. Ignatius, who had a mother's heart for the sick, saw the weary lines in his face, he ordered him off at once to some well-known mineral springs about three miles from Montepulciano. Paschase obeyed, but his cure soon turned into another mission. He was Cardinal Cervini's confessor and very dear friend,[1] and Marcello, who knew his worth, hearing that he was to be so near the native place of the Cervini, begged him to visit the family. The result was that Cynthia and her sisters made a retreat under his direction before he left the neighbourhood. Retreats were new adventures in those days, and very real and stirring spiritual experiences they must have been when directed by men like Broët, who had learned their 'Exercises' not out of a book, but from the lips of the saint who had kneaded them with his blood and tears. The effect of the retreat on Cynthia's soul remained fresh to the day of her death. Ever after, Father Paschase was for her the ideal priest. 'She was greatly devoted to him and full of his praises,' says the Autobiography. No doubt she brought her son to receive his blessing, and that was Robert Bellarmine's first introduction to the Jesuits.

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[1] *Autobiography*, n. ii.

[2] Letter published by Dr. G. Buschbell in the *Historisches Jahrbuch* of Munich in 1902. B. xxiii, s. 69.

4. When Robert was eight years old, his first formal lessons began. There was a grammar school in the town, and at it he and his brothers learned to chant *mensa*, *mensae*, *mensam*. Scraps of history were taught him too, 'old tales of Troy and Fesole and Rome,' which he treasured up for the delight of Camilla, the sister who was his favourite in the family. He seems to have been a great lover of books even in those early days. And the town itself, with romance in its every stone, must have been an infinite joy to the dawning intelligence of a little, wondering, bright-witted lad such as he. Patriotism was parochial in sixteenth century Italy, but all the more intense for that reason. Montepulciano was Robert's only native land, and its grey towers piled themselves up in his heart as the years went by. It is not easy to determine how far a man is influenced unconsciously by the traditions in his blood. If all were known, perhaps Bellarmine's political theories, which drove King James of England into such

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[1] It was to Cervini that Broët and Salmeron addressed the well-known letter from Edinburgh in April 1542, telling him of their hair-breadth escapes and adventures in Ireland, where Father Paschase had gone about among 'Oynells' and 'Odonels' disguised in kilts, and with a price in English gold upon his head.

tantrums, would be seen to have taken something of their sensibly democratic colour from the stirring history of a small city set upon a hill.

After Robert's death, Camilla told of a pact which the two of them had made when they were young. Her part of it was to leave a lamp ready by his bedside each night so that he might read himself to sleep. Then he, in exchange, was to tell her stories. In the evening before saying good-night they used to sit arm in arm by the window, like a small Monica and Augustine, looking out at the deepening stars. Robert already took a great interest in the pattern of the heavens, and was able to tell his sister the names of the constellations and some very Ptolemaic facts about the movement of the spheres. He never became a scientific astronomer, but from the beginning he loved to try and spell out the thoughts of God in creation, and so, very soon, had his foot on that 'ladder of fifteen steps' by which he was to climb to sanctity. As for the stories he told during those sunset colloquies, we may be sure that Horatius figured in them largely. Clusium was only a few miles away, and Lars Porsena, who swore by the nine gods, was the reputed founder of Montepulciano.

Under the stimulus of his holy mother's counsel and example, Robert's spiritual aptitude began quickly to flower. She knew in her quiet, persuasive way how to put eternity into the child's heart, with the result that God became for him infinitely more real and interesting than the shadowy heroes of history. He watched her with the terribly shrewd eyes which children so often possess, and argued it out that, if his perfect mother loved God so well, then how lovable God must be. Cynthia's life was very austere, and naturally enough her boy's first efforts in the hard way of the saints took an austere form too. He did not like early rising. What boy ever did? But he struggled with himself until it became his habit to be up first, however frosty the morning. Then, kneeling by his bed, he offered the new day to God, and recited the Little Office of the Blessed Virgin. So, at least, the old biographers say, and there is no reason to think that they are inventing. They tell us, in particular, that while still a child Robert used to fast regularly on the eve of Our Lady's feasts, a real fast such as grown-ups practised and such as must have been a terrible effort for a hungry little boy.[1]

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[1] Fuligatti, *Vita*, pp. 14–15; Bartoli, *Vita*, pp. 20–21.

One old man of Montepulciano, who was young when Robert was young, was questioned by the Episcopal notaries in 1622. After a few generalities, he stopped abruptly, saying: 'I can tell you nothing else except that he was more an angel than a man.'[1] We may leave it at that, as detailed stories of precocious sanctity, told for the first time half a century after their alleged occurrence, are not particularly impressive.

Much of his childhood must have been spent in bed, for he was so frail and delicate that it was feared he would never reach man's estate. Two generations afterwards, a little nephew and namesake of his fell very ill. In a letter which he wrote to console his brother then, he said: 'Cheer up, where there's life, there's hope. During three or four years of my own childhood I was at death's door from intestinal obstructions and still, in the end, nature won through.'[2] Constant coughs and colds were also his portion, owing to the weakness of his lungs, and he must have suffered terribly during the long winter months when icy blizzards from the Apennines made a playground of Montepulciano.

In the April of 1555, when Robert was quite old enough to appreciate the great event, his uncle Cardinal Cervini was elected Pope. Montepulciano went wild with excitement. Nepotism was still the tradition, and it was taken for granted that the new Pope would do great things for his relatives and his native place. But Marcellus II was not like that, and he wrote to his dear ones begging them to help him in the great work of reform, to which he was called, by keeping to their station and going on with their lives as before. When accused of harshness to his own flesh and blood, he merely shrugged his shoulders. It was the will of God, and that ended the matter. Poor Cynthia, his best loved sister and one so like him in soul, had to endure much prosy counsel from the male members of the family. Her brother Alessandro wrote telling her that she must not hire more maids on the strength of Marcello's election, nor must she allow people to call her 'my lady.' Geronimo, a relative resident in Rome, was still more precise. 'Now that summer is coming, Madonna Cynthia ought to wear a damask frock without any finery,' he says. They might both of them have spared their pains, because Madonna Cynthia was not in the least danger of losing her head. When thanking Alessandro for his kind thought of her, she assured him that he need have no fear. She was too tired of the world, she said, to be bothered with its pomp, which was only smoke and vanity. Three weeks later, Marcello was dead and Alessandro was overwhelmed. It was Cynthia's turn to act the counsellor then, and her letter to the afflicted man was as brave a document as Siena's Catherine could have written. Submission to the sweet will of God, she reminded him, was, after all, the only philosophy. Nothing else could stand up to death and give the lie to every form of despair.[1]

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[1] Process of Bellarmine's Beatification, Rome, 1712, *Summarium additionale*, n. 2, § 10.

[2] Le Bachelet, *Bellarmin avant son Cardinalat*, p. 377; cf. p. 3, n. 2.

Robert's first ambition, apparently, was to be a doctor, and with it his mother expressed herself well pleased, because, as she said in her practical way, 'it would enable him to earn good money.'[2] But in her heart of hearts she had other hopes for him, hopes which she dared not breathe while her husband was so set on family glory. Vincenzo had good reason to be sanguine, for his son was an exceptionally brilliant boy. In 1556, when he was fourteen, Cynthia told her brother with a little touch of maternal pride that 'everybody was lost in astonishment at his intelligence.' When a learned doctor came to the town that year, advertising a course of logic, Vincenzo strained his resources to enable his clever son to attend the lessons. His inability to pay the modest fees is a sad commentary on the state of his affairs, but Alessandro who loved Robert as if he were his own child, gladly undertook the burden. All seemed to be going well, then, and Vincenzo began to dream of his boy in a doctor's cap, famous and wealthy. Robert himself, too, had his eyes on that plain and understandable vision, and we have now to see how it gradually grew dim and faded into one more splendid.

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[1] Fuligatti, *Vita*, p. 10.

[2] Le Bachelet, *Bellarmin avant son Cardinalat*, p. 5.

CHAPTER II

AT SCHOOL

1. In the autumn of 1552, the civic authorities of Montepulciano appealed to St. Ignatius to open a school for boys in the town. Cardinal Marcello, one of the Saint's dearest friends, had added his entreaty, but unavailingly because Ignatius had neither the money nor the men. 'Later on,' he wrote, 'we shall hold it very dear to us to be able to serve your Excellencies and the Reverend Lord Cardinal, to the glory of God Our Lord.'[1] It was not until 1557, when the Saint and Marcello were both in their graves, that the good people got their desire. The Jesuits came in October, and before the month was out had a hundred and twelve boys under their care. Robert Bellarmine and his brothers were among the first to join their classes, and his mother immediately put herself under their direction. The memory of Broët was ineffaceable. Ever since she had met him, there was a great longing in her heart to be near men whose lives were similarly inspired. Though a home-keeping lady and a great lover of quiet ways, she had ventured on a pilgrimage to Loreto the previous year to make her confession to the Jesuits there. Alessandro, as usual, was worried about her, but she had told him not to be anxious. She was not afraid of a long tramp, and the expenses would not be heavy because she would be quite content with any kind of accommodation.[2] Frequent communion was not a common practice in the sixteenth century, but Cynthia, inspired by her new counsellors, took to going every second day. Robert was by her side whenever he could obtain his father confessor's leave; and, not content with that, he did his very best to get the other boys to go too. He was sincerity

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[1] *Monumenta Historica Societatis Jesu :* Monumenta Ignatiana. Epistolae et instructiones, Madrid, 1906, t. IV, pp. 448–489.

[2] Fuligatti, *Vita*, p. 7.

itself, and all his convictions were burning ones that clamoured for propagation.[1]

In the world of school he was an immediate and great success. It was a strenuous world, but, in its way, a happy one. Renaissance enthusiasm was still alive to invest even the dull details of grammar with a romantic glow. Paradigms and conjugations were magic casements then, opening on that fairyland of humanism—eloquence. Eloquence was the great word, the shibboleth of every schoolmaster who took his business seriously. There was a beautiful simplicity in the syllabuses of the time as they included but one subject, really, Latin, and had but one aim, *ad perfectam eloquentiam informare*. 'Eloquentia Latina' spelt education. The mother tongue, the language of Dante, was given no place in the scheme. And neither were history nor mathematics. Masters were expected, of course, to awaken an interest in these matters by wise hints and suggestions, and it was piously hoped that the natural curiosity of boy nature would do the rest out of school-hours. But the natural curiosity of boy nature had, we may be sure, much more interesting things to think about. At school, Latin in all its shapes and forms was the daily fare. If a boy was to be eloquent, and there was little else worth being, his Latin must become a part of himself, and he must have all its pet phrases and characteristic turns ever singing in his memory. Further, he must have the canonized precepts of the two great masters, Cicero and Quintilian, at his finger tips, and be ready to justify every word or trope he employed in his exercises by some classical quotation. If he were wise, then, he would talk Latin on his way to school. In school, he *must* talk it. No other tongue but Cicero's had the slightest chance of a hearing, whether it was to ask a question, or plead an excuse. Eloquence, the boys were told, would be the reward exceeding great of all their pains. Without eloquence nothing would avail them in life. 'Take it away,' said the Jesuit humanist, Muret, 'and the syllogisms of professors become as contemptible as the rattling bones of a skeleton.' Father Polanco, the secretary of St. Ignatius, thought so too. A little wisdom with eloquence, he wrote, was better than mute inglorious wisdom, however profound. But this ideal of education was not peculiar to the Order. It was the ideal of the age, and insisted on as much in Calvinist and Lutheran schools as it was in the schools of the Jesuits.[1] It must have proved attractive to Robert Bellarmine as he had great natural gifts of speech and the temperament of an orator.

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[1] Le Bachelet, *Bellarmin avant son Cardinalat*, pp. 6–7; Tacchi Venturi, *Storia della Compagnia di Gesù in Italia*, vol. 1, p. 230.

His dearly loved uncle Alessandro took the keenest interest in his studies. The boy wrote to him often, and sent him specimens of his Latinity. A few of these letters have survived, and we can almost see serious sixteen biting its pen over their composition. The earliest of them starts off with a grand Ciceronian flourish. 'Illustrissimo Domino Alexandro Cervino avunculo ac tamquam patri plurimum observando Robertus Bellarminus S.P.D.' It is a letter of sympathy for the death of Alessandro's young daughter. Robert says he did not write sooner for fear of being troublesome to his uncle in his sorrow, and he then offers the best little counsels of consolation he can devise. They are rather sententious counsels, and Alessandro must have smiled as he read them. But between the lines it is easy to spell out the thoughts in Robert's heart, simple thoughts of a father's sorrow, and a great longing to be able to comfort him. He ends his letter with a humble appeal for the correction of his elaborate periods. When next he writes, a month later, he sends a long elegiac piece he has composed in praise of St. Catherine, the virgin-martyr of Alexandria. It is schoolboy-ish, the kind of thing any clever lad of sixteen might put together if he knew his Latin well and had a Gradus at his elbow. Robert certainly had no Gradus, and was superior to that extent. He says that he does not know why St. Catherine is so much in favour with scholars like himself, but he believes that it must be on account of her heaven-sent eloquence. They, too, are in quest of that supreme prize, and hope that, by the intercession of the holy virgin, God may give them a share of it. In 1559, he writes again, this time in Italian, but is still preoccupied with 'eloquentia latina.' He begins his letter by invoking Cicero, '*il padre della eloquentia*' and tells, in a pleased way, that they are engaged at that moment on a study of his speeches.[2]

The burden put daily on their memories would appal a modern schoolboy. They had to learn by heart every passage their master explained, and be ready to declaim it at any time with appropriate gestures. Deportment was second only to style in the estimation of masters. It was, in fact, style in action, the style of the eye. The well-known seventeenth century English traveller, Richard Lassels, bears glowing testimony to its effect on the manners of Italian boys. He was delighted with what he saw of them, though schoolboys in other parts of the world he considered to be ‘ an insolent Nation ’. ‘ They are most respectful to one another in words and deeds,’ he says, ‘ treating one another with *vostra signoria* and abstaining from all tricks.’ [1]

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[1] J. B. Herman, *La Pédagogie des Jésuites au XVIe siècle*, Louvain, 1914, ch. v, 'L'Eloquentia Latina'; cf. *Monumenta Historica S.J.*: Monumenta Paedagogica, *passim*.

[2] These letters are given in Le Bachelet's *Bellarmin avant son Cardinalat*, pp. 7–12, 16, 17.

Robert became engrossed in the poets during those school-days. He tells us that he completely lost his heart to Virgil, whose tenderness and wistful beauty of phrase fascinated him. He used to sit up, far into the night, spellbound over the Aeneid. Like St. Augustine, he got to know it all practically by heart, and in his own juvenile attempts at verse never used a word which had not Virgil's authority.[2] Many indications show that he had a vein of real poetry in him, but the stilted, artificial literary canons of his time gave him no scope. The best of all his literary efforts was a commemorative ode which he composed when Cardinal de Nobili, who had been raised to the purple at the age of twelve, died in 1558, at the age of seventeen. They were nursed upon the self-same hill, and the wonderful story of the little Cardinal who had amazed the world with his great learning and his still greater sanctity, was often told round the firesides of his native town. Robert's heart was in the touching lines which he wrote about him, and when he recited them in public before all the notable people of Montepulciano, he had their tears for a tribute.[3] It is characteristic of him that the verses of his which have survived are all in praise of something or somebody. His habitual attitude throughout life to God and to His world was one of praise—the spirit of the *Benedicite*. It has to be remembered that the Latin which he handled with such ease was as dead and difficult a language for him as for a modern English boy. His success with it gives some indication of his literary ability, ability which he himself rated none too highly. ‘He had a mind,’ he wrote in his Autobiography, ‘not subtle or sublime, but versatile rather, which made it easy for him to grasp whatever subject he happened to be pursuing.’ When an old man, he was appointed censor of Father Sacchini’s big History of the Society of Jesus. In it he found himself compared to his cousin Riccardo Cervini, who was said to be his equal in goodness, but not in talent. Here is Robert’s note: ‘Nescio an verum sit quod de me discitur: “Pietas par, indoles ingenii major,” Erat enim Riccardus et ingenio et pietate mihi superior. Sola actione et vivacitate illum superabam.’[1] He would have it, then, that his cousin outshone him in both goodness and ability, and that he was his better only in practical gifts and in a certain natural nimbleness of wit. His masters at Montepulciano thought very differently. In 1559, the Rector of the College, writing to Father Polanco, described him in two languages as ‘*il primo della schola nostra, non longe a regno Dei*’.

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[1] *The Voyage of Italy*, Part 1, p. 14. Lassels did his travelling in the years immediately after Bellarmine's death, but conditions had not changed much since the Cardinal's school-days. In the opinion of John Wilkes, the famous demagogue, Lassels' ‘ Voyage ’ was ‘ one of the best accounts of the curious things of Italy ever delivered to the world in any book of travels ’.

[2] *Autobiography*, n. ii : ‘ In pueritia coepit amare poeticam, et magnam noctis partem aliquando consumebat in legendo Virgilio, quem ita sibi familiarem habuit, ut cum carmina exametra scriberet, nullum in eis verbum poneret non Virgilianum.’

[3] ‘ Non sine lacrymis audientium.’ Le Bachelet, *Auctarium Bellarminianum :* Supplément aux Œuvres du Cardinal Bellarmin, Paris, 1913, p. 688 ; *Bellarmin avant son Cardinalat*, p. 29.

The school, like the town which had clamoured so persistently for it, had a sad history. There were queer people even in Montepulciano, and vested interests eventually proved too strong for the Fathers. Their great offence, as usual, was that they charged no fees. Rival schoolmasters had to make their living out of their lessons and, naturally resenting such competition, organized a bitter campaign against the ‘Spanish intruders’ as they called them. No means were considered too unfair. One fellow went to a brothel each night disguised as a Jesuit and taking good care that he should be seen by people ill-affected to the Order. The news spread like wildfire. Boys were straightway removed from the college, and the unfortunate Rector, Gambaro, was attacked so foully that he had to fly the town altogether. By the year 1563 the Fathers were practically scholarless and destitute. Laynez then gave them reluctant orders to sell off their effects and distribute the proceeds to the poor. That, for the time being, was the end of the College of Montepulciano, but as Orlandino, the Order’s first official historian, remarked, the unsuccessful venture justified itself splendidly at least in one respect, since it gave the Church Robert Bellarmine.

Robert, while still at school, had heard of the mean plotting against his masters, and had seen some of the sarcastic challenges which their enemies were in the habit of posting in public places. Let these Jesuit boys, they said, meet the pupils of the other schools in a battle of wits, and then the townspeople would soon see for themselves the incompetence of the new masters. To a loyal nature such as Robert's, this was a direct call to arms. He rushed off to the Palazzo della Signoria, and demanded that arrangements be made for the contest immediately. Though he had disciplined himself to gentleness, he was by no means a colourless, uncombative person. He was a real Italian boy, with the hot, spirited blood of generations of soldiers in his veins. So he set himself at once to writing stinging epigrams about the enemy. People in those days dearly loved an epigram, and Robert's efforts delighted them hugely. He had first blood. When the day of battle arrived, all the learned men of the town were present as judges or spectators, and there was a great crush of ordinary folk, who only knew that there was a fight of some kind on, and wanted to see it. Robert opened fire with a provocative metrical challenge to his opponents. Then he delivered a vigorous Latin speech in the style of Cicero against Catiline, and wound up with another of his epigrams. It was now the turn of the opposition party, but the judges soon found that they had nothing to say, or if they had, it had been driven out of their heads by Robert's fervid oratory. They retreated without more ado, while their mothers and fathers sought out the Jesuit Rector to ask him about vacancies. The school was saved for the time being, owing chiefly to young Bellarmine's efforts but, in spite of all that the Fathers and their friends could do, the venture had to be abandoned some months later.[1]

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[1] *Auctarium Bellarminianum*, p. 688.

That was not his only appearance in public. He was a good actor, we are told, and impressed people greatly by his interpretation of the parts assigned him in the tableaux and plays which were one of the novelties of Jesuit education. It was the pleasant custom of Tuscany to give children a great time on the feast of St. Nicholas, the original of our Santa Claus. On one such feast Robert wrote and delivered in the parish church an excellent Latin discourse, his audience consisting, says the reporter, of 'many gentlemen and learned men and other persons.'[2] He wrote Latin hymns, too, for the other boys to sing. But the biggest honour done him was the direct result of his holy life. There was attached to the Jesuit mission an old and flourishing confraternity under the patronage of St. Stephen. It was meant primarily for adults, but Robert had been allowed to join, and so greatly did he edify the members by his fervour and regularity that the prior or prefect pressed him to give them a sermon one Holy Thursday. He was only fifteen then. His Jesuit masters supplied him with the matter of the address, but the style of it and the gestures were all his own. It succeeded splendidly, the best part of its rhetoric being the young preacher's earnestness and innocence. After that, he was often called upon to speak at short notice, and he never failed.[1]

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[1] The detailed account of this little exploit is given in a letter of the Rector of the College to Father Laynez, the General of the Jesuits. Le Bachelet, *Bellarmin avant son Cardinalat*, pp. 18–19.

[2] Le Bachelet, *l.c.* pp. 6, 19.

2. Travellers from England in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries give many vivid pictures of old Italian society in their books. It will not be irrelevant to quote from them at this point, as their observations may serve in a small way to put Robert Bellarmine in his social context, without which he is only a boy in the clouds. What struck these men most was the courtesy and kindness of their hosts. It seemed to be universal, the badge of every grade and rank. Lassels noted how they never gaped at strangers, nor whispered when in company, nor used, when others were by, a language which they could not understand. 'They are precise in point of Ceremony and Reception,' he says, 'and are not puzzled at all when they hear a great man is coming to visit them. There is not a man of them but he knows how to entertain men of all conditions.'[2] He contrasts 'their most commendable' manners with those of other countries. 'They never rush into one another's chambers without knocking, as they do in France; nor crosse the designs or business of him they visit as they do in England.' But it is in the ceremonies of the table that their superiority is most marked. Fynes Moryson tells his readers again and again that the Italians 'eat neatly and modestly,' as if that were something new and extraordinary in his travelling experiences.[3] The quaint

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[1] *Autobiography*, n. iv: 'Propter eam concionem, saepe compellebatur a Priore verba facere in eadem confraternitate, brevi spatio temporis ad se parandum concesso.'

[2] *The Voyage of Italy*, Part I, p. 13.

[3] *An Itinerary written by Fynes Moryson, Gent.; containing his ten yeeres Travell through Germany, Denmarke, Poland, Italy*, etc., London, 1617, Part III, p. 44, *et alibi*. Moryson visited Italy towards the end of the sixteenth century.

Somerset gentleman, Tom Coryat, bears the same witness. 'I observed a custom,' he says, 'in all those Italian cities and townes through which I passed, that is not used in any other country that I saw in my travels, neither do I think that any other nation of Christendome doth use it, but only Italy. The Italian, and also most strangers that are commorant in Italy doe alwaies at their meals use a little forke when they cut their meat. . . . The reason of this curiosity is that the Italian cannot by any means endure to have his dish touched with fingers, seeing all men's fingers are not alike clean.'[1] Coryat's fellow-countrymen were not so particular. He complains that his friends jeered at him and dubbed him a *Furcifer*, when he tried to introduce the custom in his own household, on his return to England.

Lassels is equally emphatic in praise of the ceremonies of the table as carried out in Italy. Sometimes, he says, the men dressed for the occasion, putting on 'a coloured coate and a little cap to dine in.' The dishes were brought on in a peculiar order. 'They serve in the best meats first, and eat backwards; that is, they begin with the second course, and end with boyled meat and pottage.' As evidence of their tact, he reports that while at table 'they never present you with salt, or brains of any fowle, lest they may seeme to reproach unto you want of wit.' That kind of courtesy might prove embarrassing, but their method of offering drink was both considerate and sensible. 'They bring it to you upon a sottocoppa of sylver with three or four glasses upon it; two or three of which are straight neckt glasses (called there caraffas) full of several sorts of wine or water, and one empty drinking glass into which you may powre what quantity of wine and water you please to drink, and not stand to the discretion of the waiters as they do in other countries.'

All three observers are high in praise of the friendly, sociable character of the people. Lassels noted that they were 'great lovers of their brethren and near kindred,' and that they called one another always by their Christian names. 'You might live whole years with an Italian,' he says, 'and be very well acquainted with him without knowing his distinctive surname.' The conclusion of his remarks is a splendid tribute: 'Of all the nations that I have seen, I know none that lives, clothes, eats, drinks, and speaks so much with reason as the Italians do.' Such were the countrymen and contemporaries of Robert Bellarmine, and his own life moved on the same dignified and gracious lines. The little further that is known for certain about him at this time may be given in a very few words.

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[1] Coryat's *Crudities*, 1611, vol. 1, p. 135 (Edinburgh ed.).

His health was too delicate to permit his taking part in the strenuous games of ball which were then popular in Tuscany. But there was one sport at which he was an adept,—bird-trapping. Fynes Moryson observes that 'the Italian gentlemen much delight in the art to catch birds with nets, sparing no cost or industry in that kind.' Robert was very fond of this art, and had carefully studied its technique. He was always welcome when a trapping party was being organized, as he was an expert at mending broken nets. That is one of the accomplishments he puts down to his credit in the Autobiography. When moving towards his eightieth year with all his laurels about him, he remembered with pleasure that the nets which he mended as a boy looked as though they had never been broken.[1] Such an item as this might have come from the Little Flowers of St. Francis, but it gave great offence to one *advocatus diaboli* as being evidence of Cardinal Bellarmine's colossal pride!

It was not out of doors, however, that Robert found his most congenial recreation. What he liked best was to read an interesting book or play tunes on his violin. 'At this time,' he informs us, 'I learned to sing with ease and also to play various instruments of music.'[2]

About his intimacies with God we can only guess, and guessing is not biography. He seems to have grown in His love as a flower or tree grows, silently and imperceptibly, and thus his boyhood passed away with its homely vicissitudes:

> Duties enough and little cares,
> And now was quiet, now astir,
> Till God's hand beckoned unawares.

3. Robert's first ambition, we know, was to win a doctor's cap. But there were many sacred influences in league against that dream. His mother, who was 'most devoted to the Society of Jesus,'[3] prayed daily that God might call her boy

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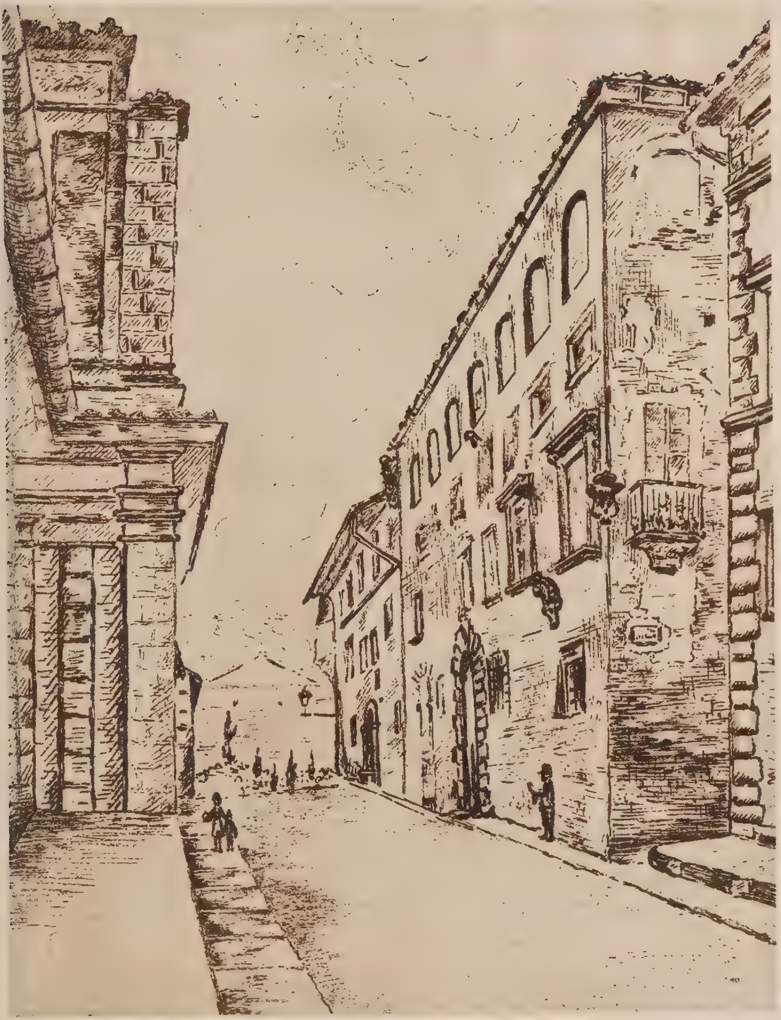
[1] *Autobiography*, n. iv.

[2] *Autobiography*, n. iv.

[3] Le Bachelet, *Bellarmin avant son Cardinalat*, pp. 10, 13, 14. 'Madame Cynthia has been a good mother not only to Robert but to all this College,' writes the Rector to Laynez in 1560.



HOME OF BLESSED ROBERT BELLARMINE'S BOYHOOD.
House on right with shields.

to His service in its ranks. 'Since her meeting with Father Broët,' writes Robert himself, 'she always loved the Society, and desired greatly to see all her five boys Jesuits.' The memory of Pope Marcellus, too, made its insistent appeal. Robert knew how he had loved and praised St. Ignatius and his sons.[1] These men had come into his own life, and he was able to study their ideal at close quarters. Its blend of culture and holiness must have proved infinitely attractive to one such as he, so highly gifted naturally and supernaturally. And penetrating all these influences, giving them force and final victory, was the grace of God.

Already in 1558, Robert's mind was made up. Father Gambaro writes to Father Laynez, in the May of that year, saying that one of his scholars, a nephew of Pope Marcellus, had expressed a strong wish to become a Jesuit.[2] In another letter, some months later, he asks his superior to remember the boy in his prayers. 'He has the intellect of an angel,' continues the Rector, 'and his actions, his conscience, his life are all angelic. . . . His mother, a holy woman, loves him as her own soul, and for this very reason she would the more willingly give him to us, because she sees that in giving Robert she is giving all that she holds dearest in the world.'[3] The General answered that he would gladly take him, provided he obtained his father's consent also. Robert had not dared to mention his cherished project to Vincenzo, and he can hardly be blamed. He knew very well what rosy hopes his father was building on him and, being a loving son, he hated to shatter them.[4] But action soon became imperative. Robert's uncle Alessandro had generously offered to pay his expenses at the University of Padua, while he pursued his medical studies. The necessary permit of Duke Cosimo had been obtained, and Vincenzo began to think joyfully that the tide of his family's fortunes had at last turned, and his dreams were coming true. As the day for departure approached, Robert became more and more uneasy. The lure of the world and its glory was strong. Thoughts came, unbidden and unwelcome, of a future of worldly triumphs which, with his youth and talents, he might well hope to achieve. Family affection, too, the *pietas* bred in the bones of all his race, cried out against his decision. Traitor, it seemed to call him, deserting duty for a dream. And how ghostly and unsubstantial it looked, that dream of his, set beside the tangible, dashing ambitions and gay *bravura* of the world !

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[1] 'Hic Marcellus prorsus paterno affectu nostram diligit societatem.' *Mon. Hist. S.J.*: Ignatiana, IX, p. 16 and cf. pp. 13 seq.

[2] Le Bachelet, *Bellarmin avant son Cardinalat*, p. 6.

[3] Quoted Bartoli, *Vita*, p. 23.

[4] Le Bachelet, *l.c.*, p. 21.

Robert was in deep waters at last, but, as was his way, he left the decision to God. This was the manner of his meditation as set down in the third person in his Autobiography : ' One day, when he was sixteen years old and about to depart for Padua, he began to ask himself seriously how he could obtain true peace of soul. When he had run over and pondered for a long time on the dignities and worldly honours which he might hope to win, the thought came to him how brief was their stay, and how little durable even the biggest of earthly prizes. And thus reflecting, a great horror of such things took hold of him, so great that he resolved to seek an Order in which the danger of worldly advancement did not exist to trouble his soul. Knowing well that none was more secure in this respect than the Society of Jesus, he came to the conclusion that the Society was his place, whatever the choice might cost him.'[1] But this was not the end of his deliberations. Robert was a very prudent boy and, before finally committing himself, opened his heart to the best loved of his masters, Father Alphonso Scariglia. ' He asked him,' he says, ' as between friend and faithful friend, to tell him frankly how he found life in the Society and whether he was content with his vocation. Or was there any hidden evil or danger in the life, which did not appear on the surface ? To which questions the good Father answered that all went exceedingly well with him, and that in the Society he was *contentissimum*, content beyond content.' All Robert's doubts and hesitations vanished then. The will of God for him was plain, and, to add to his delight, he learned that his cousin and close friend, Riccardo Cervini, who was studying at Padua, wanted to be a Jesuit too. Robert and he began corresponding at once, and discussed the best means of bringing their hearts' desire to fruition. The great problem was how to get their fathers' consent, a problem they found beyond their wits to solve.

Robert was a well-known figure in Montepulciano. Many people had listened to and been charmed with his speeches, and everybody had seen him pray. It was natural enough that they should wonder what was going to become of him, now that he was growing into a man. Rumour was soon on its rounds, and the Jesuit Rector decided that it was high time his father was informed of the boy's momentous decision. He undertook the delicate mission himself, but his diplomacy was of no avail. Vincenzo was stunned by the news. It was the end of his dreams. In the bitterness of his disappointment, he sternly forbade Robert ever to go near the Jesuits or their church again. There were Dominicans in the town, and in future he must avail himself of their ministrations.[1] The poor man wrote sadly to his brother-in-law, in February 1560, bemoaning the boy's waywardness, '*il capricio di Roberto*.' He begs Alessandro to argue him out of it. 'Perhaps he will listen to you, his second father,' he said. The months that followed were weary ones for Robert. A conflict, old as the Gospel, between human love and divine, tore him two ways. But he never slackened in his resolve, and used every affectionate stratagem he knew to win over his father. His mother was his faithful ally all through. Vincenzo loved her dearly, so when he noticed her get thin and pale, and at last extremely ill owing to his obstinacy, he surrendered. Alessandro had already given his son reluctant permission, and the two fathers now wrote a joint letter to the General of the Jesuits, offering him their boys. They asked that Robert and Riccardo might be allowed to remain at home for another year, urging that the delay would prove whether their vocation was a real one, or a mere will-o'-the-wisp engendered by youthful enthusiasm. Father Laynez readily agreed, and added that he would count this year of waiting as the novitiate of the two cousins.[2]

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[1] *Autobiography*, n. v.

4. Ten miles south-west of Montepulciano is a tiny village, set on a hillside in the woods. The name of it is Il Vivo. Long ago, the Camaldolese monks had founded a hermitage there, and named it after the swift, musical stream of the place, which sang to them all day as they laboured in the fields. It was such a merry, eager stream, that it seemed, they said, *vivo*—alive. They had to quit their pleasant home, in the course of time, because the robber barons of medieval Italy would not leave them in peace and, after the ups and downs of centuries, Vivo came into the possession of Pope Paul III, who sold or gave it to his friend Riccardo Cervini. When Riccardo's son, Marcello, became Pope, he tried to bring back the hermits of St. Romuald to their ancient haunts,

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[1] Letter of the Rector of Montepulciano to Laynez, 10 December 1559 Le Bachelet, *Bellarmin avant son Cardinalat*, p. 18.

[2] *Autobiography*, n. vi.

but he could not prevail upon them to return. Alessandro, the Pope's half-brother, inherited the property and, at the beginning of June 1560, invited his nephew Robert Bellarmine to spend a holiday there with himself and his son.[1] Golden days began for Robert then. After the struggle and sorrow of the preceding months, what his soul needed most was peace. And there was peace at Vivo. The solitaries of old had chosen well. Their home, half-lost among the mountains, retained scarcely a memory of the busy, fretful world. It was a garden enclosed, a little secret sanctuary over which the pensive, amethyst skies of Perugino dreamed. Nature was in holiday mood when he came, for the opulent summer of Tuscany was bannering the woodlands with its glory. One might have pleasant rambles among them undisturbed by any sound save a blackbird's whistle or the drowsy argument of Vivo with its pebbles and reeds. That sound was unescapable. ' It is not for the memory of a spoiled hermitage that one comes to Vivo,' wrote an English traveller, ' but for the joy and sweetness, on a summer's day in Tuscany, of those living waters which run so swiftly under the trees, sometimes in great waterfalls and cascades which make a thunder in the woods, sometimes almost silently over the stones, but always with a song.'[2]

Robert and his friends were together there four months. Half a century later, that perfect time was still vivid in his memory. Sacraments and prayer and study made up their daily programme.[3] It was easy to pray in Vivo ; to pray in the morning because God was so evident in each miraculous dawn ; to pray at night when the stars were His blazon. Robert loved to watch the moon and stars. He found in them types and figures of spiritual realities. The moon's phases spoke to him of God's mysterious dealings with the souls of men, ' now shining on them with the golden beams of consolation, and now quite eclipsed, leaving them in the densest darkness. . . . Only in Heaven is He *lux perpetua* like the sun.'[4] He had deep in his Tuscan heart that love of beautiful things which is the heritage of every boy in a land of artists,

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[1] Alessandro was a deeply religious man, and well-fitted to be Robert's spiritual director at this difficult stage. '*Il Signore Alessandro*,' writes Gambaro to Laynez, 10 May 1560, '*si contenta in una cosa sola ch'è la religione*.' Le Bachelet, *Bellarmin avant son Cardinalat*, pp. 22–23.

[2] Edward Hutton, *In Unknown Tuscany*, p. 123.

[3] *Autobiography*, n. vi.

[4] *De Ascensione Mentis in Deum*, cap. v. This work of Blessed Robert is largely, though not intentionally, autobiographical.

'the great beauty of a green field, of a well-kept garden, of a company of trees, of tranquil sea and still air.' Sitting by the brook with a book in his lap, he used to watch delightedly the swift stoop of the swallows and the silvery flash in the water which told him the trout were at play. 'Quam delectat avium volatus, piscium lusus!' he wrote. Nature was to his eyes what it was to the eyes of St. Francis, a little window into Heaven. Often enough his meditations were on the stars, and trees, and flowers. 'My soul,' he used to say, 'if the beauty lavished by God on the things He made be so great, what thinkest thou, and how wonderful beyond compare must be the beauty of Him the Maker?'

Study, too, was easy and delightful in the limpid invigorating air of Vivo. Every day after dinner, a little informal *Academia* was held, when each in turn expounded some theme to be discussed later under the trellissed portico, or while rambling in the woods. Alessandro, an accomplished scholar and an excellent farmer as well, naturally took the Georgics of Virgil for his text. The great poem became alive for his listeners, for it might have been written about Vivo and their tranquil days there—*secura quies et nescia fallere vita.* Riccardo, who was good at Greek, undertook to explain Aristotle's Poetics, and Robert, with eloquence still in his dreams, the *Pro Milone* of Cicero.[1] There were great arguments after these lectures, in the manner of St. Augustine with his young charges at Cassicium, 'that country house where we found shelter in Thee from the burning summer of our time.'

But Robert was the last person to be contented with mere poetry and argument, however sweet they might be. He was of an active, practical turn, in his own words 'a lively person.' Pope Marcellus used to say that a wise man was a man slow to speak and quick to do. Robert adopted the maxim. He knew that catechizing was part of a Jesuit novice's training, so he sought out the country folk around to instruct them with the greatest patience and zeal. He used to preach, too, in the church which his uncle the Pope had built on the estate, 'but not so often,' he says.[2] There is a story that he had once to address his rustic congregation from the branches of an oak-tree, because the church was not big enough to hold the crowds that flocked to hear him. 'I learn from Signor Alessandro's wife,' writes Gambaro to Laynez on June 9, 'that our Robert has been preaching to the people at Vivo to the satisfaction of everybody.' He then adds some disturbing news : ' His father goes there in a day or two, and will strive hard to shake his purpose. Please God they will make a brave stand. Riccardo and Robert are allies *et Dominus in medio ipsorum.* A threefold cord is not easily broken.'[1] Vincenzo's new proposal was that his son should become a Dominican. In that holy and learned Order he could serve God quite as well as among the Jesuits, and yet leave his talents free to win their legitimate prizes. Many Dominicans had been Popes and Cardinals, and it is plain that Vincenzo still dreamed of Robert gorgeous in purple and perhaps even with a tiara on his head. If his uncle, why not he, and what a difference that would make to the family fortunes ! Robert answered him gently : ' Father, if I wanted preferment, I would much rather seek it at Court than in a Religious House. The reason that urges me most to become a Jesuit, is the very one you are using to try and dissuade me.'[2]

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[1] *Autobiography*, n. vi.

[2] 'Et hortabatur rusticos ad pietatem sed non adeo frequenter.'

At this time, he began a kind of ' spiritual Aeneid ' in which he proposed to recount, for his own private consolation, the history of his call to religion and the merciful dealings of God with his soul. It would have been an interesting document, but he gave it up after a time, and burned the spirited cantos that he had written. *Erubuit enim de rebus suis scribere* : ' He was ashamed of having made himself the subject of a poem.'[3] As the months wore on, the two would-be Jesuits began to chafe at the long postponement of their desire. They wanted the real thing, and not that too easeful, make-believe novitiate in Vivo, where nothing ever fretted their composure. At last, however, their prayers and entreaties prevailed. Alessandro and Vincenzo were both deeply religious men, and seeing the unmistakable will of God in their sons' determination, they bowed to it, and bade them have their way. In the middle of September the two cousins returned joyfully to Montepulciano to make their final preparations. It was a bitter-sweet time. Home and kindred meant all the world to Robert, and now he was leaving them for ever. The sixteenth was the day fixed for departure. When it came and his horse was ready at the door, he threw himself upon his knees before his father and mother, begging their blessing. Camilla, his well-loved sister, remembered sixty years later the sadness of that parting scene. They were all in tears, and as the two wayfarers jerked their bridle reins, Vincenzo could no longer keep back the thoughts of his heart. 'There goes our family's brightest hope,' he exclaimed, 'the one of all of us best able to restore its fortunes.'[1] What Cynthia felt may be read between the lines of her touching little letter to Father Laynez, offering him her boy:

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[1] Le Bachelet, *Bellarmin avant son Cardinalat*, p. 23.

[2] The details of this last encounter with his father are given in Bartoli, *Vita*, p. 37, where the Roman Process is quoted.

[3] *Autobiography*, n. ii.

> VERY REVEREND FATHER,—
>
> I thank the Divine Majesty who has deigned to call to His holy service one who was dearer to me than the very light of my eyes. Other sons I have, but he, so gifted and good, was more than any of the rest, my delight and my hope. From the very beginning I rejoiced at his desire, and am happier than ever now that I have dedicated him to God, knowing that we owe Him the best we possess. But all the same I am unable to stop the aching of my heart for my dearest boy, now parted from his mother. My only consolation is the thought that he has found a better mother and a better father, in whose hands I place him with the greatest trust. . . .
>
> Your Very Reverend Paternity's unworthy child,
> CYNTHIA CERVINI.[2]

Her husband wrote, too, a very brave and noble abdication of his hopes, full of the spirit which drew down God's abundant blessing upon Abraham. Poor Vincenzo! He could not guess the gentle, almost humorous devices of Heaven which would lead him back 'by another way into his own country,' and crown his house with glory beyond his wildest dreams.[3]

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[1] Bartoli, *Vita*, p. 39.

[2] Le Bachelet, *Bellarmin avant son Cardinalat*, pp. 30–31. Robert's mother appears to have retained her maiden name after her marriage, at least for occasional use. The letter given above is headed in the original, *Cinthia Cervini in Bellarmini*—Cynthia Cervini who has married into the Bellarmine family.

[3] Vincenzo became from this time till his death a great friend of the Jesuits, and helped them 'con grand' amore'. Le Bachelet, *l.c.*, p. 27.

CHAPTER III

THE SILENT YEARS

1. Up to this date, Robert's only world had been a little, half-forgotten town on top of a hill. He had never travelled before, and for his boyish imagination Rome was just a marvellous dream-city, dimly apprehended. Virgil had told him that it was the loveliest thing on earth, so we may guess with what a thrill he rode in at its gates on 19 September 1560. But the experience had its terrors too, as he was so innocent of the ways of the world, and he was to realize then in a striking way how much his uncle Marcello was loved. The very name of that great man had the value of a passport, with the result that shy Robert immediately found himself among friends. Whatever the faults of the Jesuits, ingratitude was not among them. Marcello had been very kind to St. Ignatius, and the sons of St. Ignatius never forgot it. When the Pope's nephew presented himself before the General of their Society, he met with the warmest of welcomes,—Father Laynez and the men who lived with him in the poor, ramshackle little house which had been the Founder's home, vieing with each other in their efforts to repay vicariously something of the debt of kindness that the Order owed Marcello. On November 27, Polanco, its secretary, announced to all the provinces as a piece of great good news, the admission of 'two nephews of the Pope who loved our Society so well.'[1] Later on, when a friend of Robert's wished to secure considerate treatment for him in some new house to which he was assigned, he had only to describe him as '*nepote di Papa Marcello.*' That phrase, which was commonly used as an appendage of honour to Bellarmine's name in the correspondence of the time, proved the best of recommendations.

But it was not only his kinship with the much-loved Marcello that made his path easy. It was his own bright, particular charm too. There was something so winning in his manner that it was impossible to know him and not be his friend. He quite captivated the great sixteenth century scholar Mgr. Sirleto, to whom he paid a timid visit on the day of his arrival in Rome, and Laynez, a shrewd judge of men, was so impressed that he permitted him to pronounce his first vows of poverty, chastity, and obedience before he had slept a single night under a Jesuit roof.[1] These vows entitled him to the letters S.J., but he had still to undergo a short period of probation in order to learn the ways of community life. He spent ten days in prayer apart from the rest of the brethren, and then, joyfully putting off his secular dress, migrated to the kitchen to prove his mettle among pots and pans. He remained there for a fortnight, and that concluded his novitiate. On October 25 he passed to the Roman College to begin his Order's course of studies—studies which for him were to end only with his life.

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[1] *Monumenta Historica Societatis Jesu :* Polanci Complementa, I, p. 221.

After his Society, the Collegio Romano was the object dearest to the heart of St. Ignatius. He had plotted and planned its foundation during many years, and smiled his way, as only he knew how, through the opposition and ridicule which tried to strangle his nursling in the cradle. When professional pedagogues said hard things about his masters, he used to answer gently : ' We do not pretend to be very learned men, but the little we have ourselves acquired we wish to give freely for the love of God, Our Lord.' Everybody was welcome to the Romano, and there was nothing to pay. Ignatius was one who never turned his back but marched breast forward, and under his inspiration the good work grew by leaps and bounds so that he had constantly to be seeking new and more commodious quarters for it. When Robert Bellarmine joined the College in 1560, it was settled in a big, bleak monastery which had been given to the Society that year by the Marchesa della Valle. Within its walls lived a hundred and fifty Jesuits, while more than six hundred extern students had their names on its register. In the following years, these hundreds gradually swelled into thousands, until the Romano became one of the most celebrated educational centres in Europe. Its curriculum is not easy to describe except by saying that it took all knowledge for its province. It was preparatory school, public school, university, and seminary all in one. Some of the scholars were little boys who had to be escorted by their mothers each morning, in quest of their first bit of Latinity, while others were big men well on their way to a doctor's degree. Every nation under heaven was represented, so that, in the recreation-hour, one might fancy Pentecost had come again. *Intra pusillam domum mundi quasi compendium*, was the historian Sacchini's description of the scene—' in one little house, a miniature of the world.'[1]

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[1] Le Bachelet, *Bellarmin avant son Cardinalat*, pp. 26, n. 3 : 31, n. 2 : 32; Bartoli, *Vita*, pp. 40–41. The ordinary law of the Order is and always has been that two full years of novitiate must be done before the vows, but St. Ignatius had left discretionary powers to his successors to abridge the period of trial if they thought well. This privilege was entirely suspended by the fifth General Congregation of the Jesuits in 1594.

The famous Spanish Jesuit, Mariana, whose theories about the removal of tyrannical kings caused such a wild storm in some political circles, was a professor at the College in 1560. Sixty years afterwards, he penned an intimate sketch of the state of its affairs then, in a big book dedicated to Bellarmine himself.

> Permit an old man [he says] to give himself the pleasure of recalling those vanished days, when you first took so eagerly to the study of the liberal arts. It was after the death of Pope Marcellus your uncle, and I was then teaching theology, though only twenty-three and, a mere amateur in learning. We were so placed that the Society had no one in Italy to fill the post, but now, I am told, there are hosts to draw from, and I can well believe it, so changed are the times.[2]

The good father then rambles on among his memories, stopping whenever a loved name occurs to him to bless it affectionately. Mariana may have been stern in his attitude towards tyrants, but he had a very warm heart for the rest of the world. The men at the Romano in his day were a distinguished company, including such intellectual giants as Toledo, Ledesma, and Emmanuel Sa. Perpignano, who had the reputation of being another Cicero, was among them too, and Giovanni-Battista Romano, a fascinating Jewish convert whose life bore a wonderful resemblance to St. Paul's. In the ranks of the students were men such as Christopher Clavius, the famous mathematician to whom the modern world is chiefly indebted for its calendar, and Jean Leunis, memorable as the originator of sodalities of Our Lady.[3] It was in such stimulating companionship that Robert Bellarmine passed three impressionable years.

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[1] *Historia Societatis Jesu*, 1620, pars II, p. 225. A very good modern account of the Roman College in Bellarmine's time is given in E. Rinaldi's *La fondazione del Collegio Romano, Arezzo*, 1914.

[2] *Scholia in Vetus et Novum Testamentum*, Parisiis, 1620, Praefatio.

[3] Sommervogel : *Les Jésuites de Rome et de Vienne en MDLXI.* This booklet is a reprint of the earliest known official catalogue of the Order. It came into Father Sommervogel's hands by the merest accident. ' Je l'aurais acheté au poids de l'or,' he says.

They were hard years, indeed, and with more than their measure of pain, but they were very fruitful and his soul came out of them tempered like a fine blade. His studies might be summed up in one word—Aristotle. For the men of the sixteenth century even more than for the men of Dante's day, Aristotle was 'the master of those that know.' But the finely discriminating reverence shown him by the great scholastics had hardened, as time went on, into unbalanced worship which was little better than superstition. In philosophy and science, his text became the law, and any divergence from it was reckoned a kind of intellectual bolshevism most dangerous to faith and morals. The Jesuit professors were men of their age and shared in its enthusiasms. According to various schemes of instruction, suggested prior to the *Ratio Studiorum*, philosophy and science should be taught in the Order, 'non solum secundum veritatem sed etiam secundum Aristotelem et ejus mentem.' Professors were counselled to praise only the sound lovers of the Stagyrite. If they wanted a little variety they might find it by abusing Averroes—'vituperare Averroin licebit si quis volet.'[1]

During his first year, Robert studied the earliest and greatest of logic books known as the *Organon*. He evidently found syllogizing uncongenial and, it is said, used to amuse himself by putting the lectures into Latin hexameters. To the logic succeeded a course of science very much 'secundum Aristotelem et ejus mentem,' as some of the questions treated prove: 'Is there such a thing as Fate?' 'Are there monsters in nature?' 'Is the heat of air of the same kind as the heat of fire?', and so on. But there was much deep stuff, too, about matter and form, motion, time and eternity, which will ever be the staple of philosophic debate. Padre Toledo was the professor in this department, a man whose 'extraordinary ability' stirred even the cautious and critical Montaigne to enthusiasm.[2]

Astronomy also was part of the year's programme, and Robert seems to have devoted himself with exceptional keenness to the study of the complicated celestial mechanisms described in Aristotle's '*De Coelo*' and '*De Meteorologia*.'

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[1] *Monumenta Paedagogica Societatis Jesu*, Madrid, 1901, pp. 485, 491.

[2] *Travels in Italy*, English tr., vol. II, p. 145.

Here again discussion ran riot on rather unpromising themes: 'If the motion of the heavens stopped, would everything be annihilated?' 'Is each of the stars a separate species?' 'Are the heavens alive?' 'Do circular motions differ specifically among themselves?' etc. Last of all came the great treatises on metaphysics, psychology, and ethics, in which Aristotle is at his magnificent best. The whole matter of the course was studied straight out of the original Greek or in Latin translations, as there were no handy text-books then to lighten a beginner's burden.

2. The programme of studies at the Roman College was crowded enough even for a strong man, but poor Bellarmine was ill all the time—*toto triennio aeger.*[1] During his first year, he was the victim of a strange lethargy which weighed him down and turned every mole-hill on his path into a mountain. To this was added, in the following years, a long run of violent and persistent headaches. At the close of the course, he was so spent and worn out that the doctors judged him to be in an advanced stage of consumption and near the end of his earthly troubles. But he never complained, though the conditions under which he lived were comfortless and Spartan enough to test the endurance of the strongest. The College was extremely poor, so much so that, according to Mariana, many people considered its maintenance a miracle. 'To tell the truth,' he wrote, 'we used to fare very thinly indeed in those days.' Thin fare and weariness and pain were unable, however, to eclipse the gaiety of Signor Roberto's Tuscan heart. He bore them all with his usual smiling courage, those hard things which, as his Father Ignatius used to say, were not less a gift of God than health, and plodded away at his Aristotle as if there was nothing the matter with him. The result of his persistence was that he became the best philosopher in the house, and was chosen by his professors to defend in a public disputation the whole body of peripatetic conclusions. These disputations were very popular in the sixteenth century, and took, to some extent, the place of the theatre in modern days. It was the fashion then to stage arguments as it is now to stage plays, and any learned doctor who liked might join in, to see whether he could tie the poor 'defendant' in a knot, a feat to which much glory was attached. The occasion was invested with a great deal of solemnity, many cardinals and other church dignitaries

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[1] *Autobiography*, n. vii.

being invited. Robert bore himself bravely in presence of this distinguished company. He was very quick with his replies, the old writers say, and showed a great gift for sticking to the point. But it was his modest, courteous manner that impressed them most.[1]

After the battle, he and twelve others were put forward for a Master's degree. At such times, it was customary for one or other of the candidates to give some proof of their common attainments. Here again Bellarmine was chosen and delivered a lecture on Aristotelian psychology which added still further to his reputation. When he had concluded his address, he was publicly crowned with a circlet of bay-leaves in the fashion of antiquity, and became officially, 'Il maestro Roberto.'[2] As his bad health had made methodical study wellnigh impossible, it is plain that he must have been rarely gifted to achieve such results. Whenever his headaches gave him a chance, he used to work at very high pressure, making, like another famous student, not an orderly march but 'violent irruptions into the kingdom of knowledge.' Often enough he was too ill to attend the lectures, and had to be a professor to himself. That, indeed, was the case throughout his life, his vast stores of learning being mainly the fruit of his own unaided efforts. Though so feeble physically, he had a wonderfully vigorous and keen mind. God had given him, he said, a 'donum facilitatis' which more than compensated him for the disabilities under which his body laboured. And his powers of memory were prodigious. It is interesting to note that, even at this date, he was attempting little private explorations in the vast domain which he was afterwards to conquer. God filled his life entirely, and it was inevitable that his thoughts should soon turn to theology, which is the science of God. In 1562, be borrowed the voluminous notes of Toledo's lectures on the *Summa* of St. Thomas, and copied them all out for his own use.[3]

The Jesuit students in Rome at this period were not given many holidays, being a hardier race than their brethren of to-day. Robert and his friends used to spend these infrequent breaks in the yearly round after a manner of their own. Instead of escaping to a pleasant country house for much-needed rest, they betook themselves, 'libenter et hilariter,' freely and joyously, to the prisons and hospitals of the city. The letter which tells us this, gives some interesting details about their occupations. Twice every day they used to sweep out the dusty wards and corridors, and it was they who cooked and served the patients' meals. Roman hospitals then were not the spick and span institutions which we know, but dark, forbidding places inadequately staffed. The poor folks who sought their aid found only the plainest of welcomes and, had it not been for the Christ-like charity of people such as these young Jesuits, many a sufferer might have died more comfortably in the streets. Remembering Our Lord's example on the day before His Passion, they counted it a great privilege to wash and bandage dirty, ulcerated feet. Indeed, no service was too mean or repulsive for the love of their young hearts so that the sick men soon came to regard these vacation visits as the one bright incident in their drab and dreary lives. They were to be seen night and day by the bed-sides of the dying, whispering prayers and words of comfort, and doing everything in their power to make the last moments easy. Then when the end came, it was they who dug the grave and laid the dead man to rest.[1] A very touching document has been preserved which gives the hospital experiences of a young Jesuit named Cornelius Vishaven. The uniform of the men nurses was red with a little skull-cap of the same colour, Cornelius could never get to Mass, and the only time he sat down was at meals. Otherwise he was always on his feet, hither and thither, up and down. He had to attend to ninety beds, some of which contained two patients. Twice every day he found it necessary to change his shirt, so much did he perspire. He was half starved and only once in the week got a good sleep. His day began at dawn and lasted till midnight, and he used to be so tired that, like the soldiers in the war, he often fell asleep as he tramped about the wards. Nevertheless, the story continues, he carried on ' spiritu hilarissimo.'[2]

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[1] Fuligatti, *Vita*, pp. 29–30.
[2] Bartoli, *Vita*, p. 46.
[3] Le Bachelet, *Auctarium Bellarminianum*, p. ix.

It is good to know that Robert was allowed to pay his mother a little visit during one of these arduous vacations. When a man dedicates himself to God in a very special way, it would be a strange thing if his heart were to lose its human tenderness. The story of the saints is the best evidence that earthly loves

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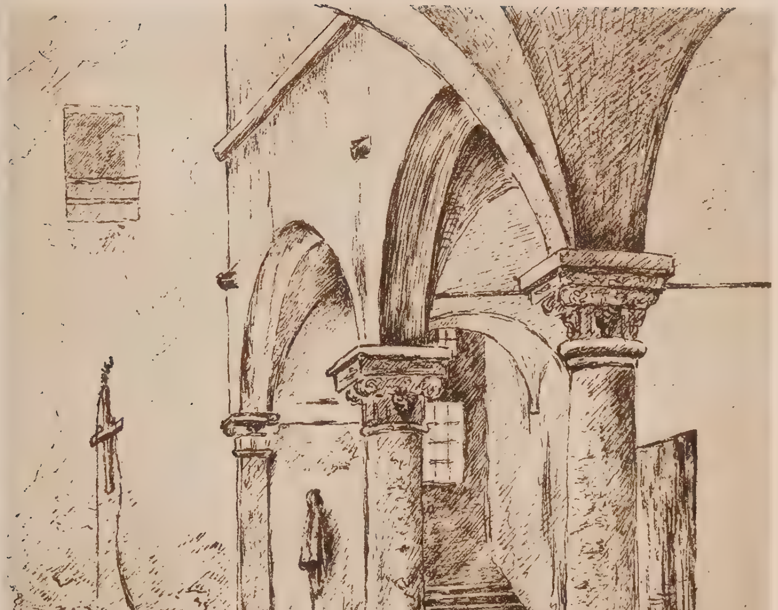
[1] *Monumenta Historica Societatis Jesu ;* Polanci Complementa, I, pp. 295 sqq. Letter of Father Hannibal Firmanus, 31 December 1561.

[2] Tacchi Venturi, *Storia della Compagnia di Gesù in Italia*, pp. 620–623.



CORTILE, BELLARMINE'S HOME, MONTEPULCIANO.

are not thrown away as too mean, but only caught up into the divine, and made thereby more sweet and safe and strong than they could ever have been on their own plane. Perhaps they lose a little of their eloquence, but then, most deep feeling is dumb. Robert Bellarmine certainly did not make a pageant of his heart, and we do not possess a single letter written by him home, whether it be because they perished or because they never existed. The first explanation is probably the right one, but in any case, one like him whose life was all love, needs no defence. Indeed, so strong were his home affections that the officials who were given the unpleasant task of contesting his sanctity, used to bring the matter up as an argument against him. He loved his kith and kin too well, they urged, to have been a man of great detachment. Though, as a rule, his letters are so business-like and colourless, he could be expansive when the mood took him, and gossip very pleasantly. Once when his cousin Riccardo complained about the infrequency and shortness of his correspondence, he wrote back a huge letter in which the *vera fraternitas* of the scattered Order is beautifully reflected. Everybody wanted to be remembered to Riccardo—'tutto il collegio di Roma.' Robert mentions no fewer than forty names, and has some little bit of news about each, knowing that it would be welcome. The spirit of piety and zeal which animated himself and his companions is apparent in other letters of the same period. Father Firmanus recalled how they used to give Superiors no peace with their constant entreaties to be allowed to risk health and life in the Indies or Japan. When volunteers were wanted in 1562 for a perilous mission in the very jaws of the Great Turk, every single scholastic in the house put forward reasons why he in particular should be allowed to go. Without the flags and trumpets, they too knew the mood of being 'heart-sick for the smile of danger,' and had in them the stuff of the great adventurers.

One detail only of Robert Bellarmine's spiritual history at this time has come down to us, his extreme fondness for the little book called 'The Imitation of Christ.' Half a hundred years after his student days in Rome, he wrote: 'From boyhood to old age, I have read this little book over and over again—*saepissime volvi et revolvi*—and have ever found it new and fresh and delightful.'[1] The chapter which sings the praises of solitude and silence must have been an especial favourite, for we are told that he loved his cell and discovered in it 'a dear friend,' as à Kempis promised him.

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[1] *De Scriptoribus Ecclesiasticis*, 1613. Sub nom., Thoma de Kempis.

3. By the end of his three weary philosophic years, it had become quite plain to Bellarmine's superiors that he was too broken in health for further study, and they accordingly decided that he should go to the college in Florence as a master, hoping that this new occupation and his native Tuscan air might restore his strength. Twenty shillings was the sum allotted for the expenses of the long journey, which he was directed to make in the company of two other students. Everybody concerned knew perfectly well that it would not last a quarter of the way, but this was all part of the game. People who had vowed poverty must be ready to feel its pinch. The Franciscan soul in Robert loved these little courtly tributes to his 'Lady,' and he asked eagerly whether they might beg their way when the four scudi were gone.[1] He bore with him an anxious letter from Polanco to the Rector in Florence, which warned that good man to be careful how he employed his new recruit. But there were assurances, too, that ill-health or no ill-health, 'Robert would not fail to come to the rescue,' should the need arise. The reasons given for his appointment are interesting. One is that he may rest and get strong again; another, which seems to forget the first, is that he may make academic speeches in the approved style, write occasional verses, and give lectures on rhetoric and the Latin poets. 'He is a great hand at making speeches and verses,' says Polanco.[2]

For some time after his arrival in the gay city of so many poets' songs, Robert's health remained weak, and he found the teaching a sore trial. If ever a man needs to be well, it is when he has to face the exuberant spirits of the young. Going down ill to class, is like going to the stake, as every schoolmaster knows. But God was very kind to His servant, and had a great favour in store for him. In his Autobiography he simply says that he began to mend rapidly at Florence, 'owing to the change of air and the care of a very good doctor,'[3] but Brother Finali, who had charge of the sick at the Jesuit novitiate of St. Andrea in Rome, gives a more detailed account of what happened. Bellarmine, in his declining years, usually made his retreat in this house and, when he came for it, one of the first things he always did was to visit any members of the community who were in the infirmary. He used to tell them stories, of which he had an inexhaustible fund, or little bits of innocent gossip to make them laugh. 'One day,' says Finali's report, 'he came into the room of a sick man, and I chanced to be present while he was telling the patient what had happened to him when he was a master at Florence. He had begun seriously to doubt, he said, whether he would be able to go on with that work, or to fulfil his other duties, owing to a "hectic fever" from which he was suffering. But hope did not die in his heart that God would take away this obstacle to the better service of His Divine Majesty. And so he prayed, and his prayer was: "Dear Lord, I do not want to die now, because I want to work for You."[1]

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[1] Le Bachelet, *Bellarmin avant son Cardinalat*, p. 45.
[2] Le Bachelet, *l.c.*, pp. 44, 45.
[3] *Autobiography*, n. viii.

The hectic fever left him immediately and never returned, but that did not mean that he was never to be ill again. All it means is that God and the 'very good doctor' rescued him from a particular deadly disease which had him in its grip at the time. Some men suffer all their lives, and yet live to an advanced age. They are rarely ill and hardly ever well. Such a one was Robert Bellarmine, and the marvellous and inspiring thing about him is that he accomplished so much in spite of the terrible odds against him. In the process of his beatification, some ingenious advocate introduced into his evidence two columns, one containing the fluctuating record of his health at various periods, and another, alongside it, crammed with a corresponding list of his labours and achievements. They make profoundly impressive parallels.[2]

After his cure, Robert threw himself into his allotted task with redoubled energy. On November 7, when he had been in Florence but a few weeks, he was invited to deliver an address from the famous pulpit in which, seventy years earlier, Savonarola had thundered forth his denunciations. The young Jesuit's appearance under Brunelleschi's dome caused a sensation in the city. He was barely twenty-one at the time, and it was an unheard of thing—*cosa nuova et insolita in Firenze*—for a mere boy like him to be given so distinguished a commission. But he soon set the misgivings of his large and very learned audience at rest. The subject of his discourse was 'the praise of knowledge,' not indeed such knowledge as pagans might and did possess, but the Christian kind, which had virtue for its crown. His own life was destined to be the perfect illustration of his theme. When he came to an end, there was but one verdict. The archbishop and notable people who had heard him, says the report, were 'astounded with his performance, and avowed that they had never listened to a finer address.'[1]

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[1] The Roman Process of 1712, *Summarium*, p. 26; 'Signore, io non voglio per hora morir perche voglio servirvi.'

[2] Roman Process of 1828 (Cardinal Zurla). *Tabellae Chronologicae Contemporaneae*, pp. 289–304.

He had to exercise his laureate functions, also, on this occasion, because Italians, and particularly the Italians of Dante's city, dearly loved reading verses. It was the custom to affix some to the Church doors on big feasts, in lieu of, or as a supplement to, the sermons. Robert became the regular purveyor of these metrical homilies during his stay in Florence.[2] His great gifts naturally won him many warm admirers, though mere praise was the last thing in the world to his taste. He must have been amused when the post brought him, one morning, a Latin poem dedicated: 'To the most noble, excellent, and universally learned young gentleman, Signor Roberto Bellarmino.' The grand style of the piece may be guessed from its first few lines:

> 'When Robert sings of heavenly things,
> Dear rival of the angel host,
> 'Tis God who lends his spirit wings,
> God, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.[3]

After his initial success in the Duomo, he was invited to preach there on two other occasions, but that was not the end of his oratory. When spring came round, his superiors bade him undertake a complete course of sermons in the little Jesuit Church of San Giovannino. In his Autobiography, he relates that 'at his very first sermon, a good woman remained on her knees the whole time, praying most earnestly. Asked why she did so, she answered that when she saw that beardless boy in the pulpit, she was panic-stricken lest he should straightway break down, and so disgrace the Society.'[4] But her anxiety was quite superfluous, for Robert says that 'he used to preach in those days with greater spirit and confidence than afterwards when old, because he felt so sure of his memory.' On one occasion in later life, when he was in an unusually communicative mood, he told the distinguished English Jesuit, Father Thomas Fitzherbert, that he could memorize a Latin sermon of more than an hour's length by simply reading it over once.[1]

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[1] Letter of P. Peruschi to St. Francis Borgia, 13 November 1563. Le Bachelet, *Bellarmin avant son Cardinalat*, p. 46.

[2] *Autobiography*, n. viii.

[3] Le Bachelet, *l.c.*, p. 47. The author explains his motive in writing, as follows:

> Aspera qui flexit multorum corda virorum
> Carmine jam dulci, id nunc sibi fata negant.
> Hac mihi de causa pro se rescribere jussit . . .

[4] *Autobiography*, n. viii.

4. The Jesuit house in the Via di Gori, next door to the great palace of the Medici, was one of the poorest and most uncomfortable in all beautiful, prosperous Florence, and the Fathers must have suffered a great deal in their straitened home. Had not a noble lady, the wife of the reigning Grand Duke, come to their assistance, they would have been compelled to close down altogether. They were totally dependent on such uncertain bounties, as they would accept nothing for their teaching and preaching. But, brave men that they were, they did not mind poverty and were more than content with their much-patched garments and miserable rooms. Robert Bellarmine seems to have been as happy as the day is long under these circumstances. Never once did he utter a complaint or ask for special treatment, though his work was very hard and his health a daily crucifixion. When he began teaching he had only a dozen boys in his class, a number which the Rector considered quite large enough, as they were big fellows and at the head of the school. But every day that went by saw fresh arrivals, until the new master began to wonder whether the invasion would ever cease.[2] These lively Tuscan youths needed a good deal of management, and Robert was conscious of certain defects in his own equipment as a disciplinarian. He was a little man to begin with, and all through life found it difficult to be stern towards anybody but himself. In looks, too, he appeared a mere boy. These were heavy disadvantages, so thinking the matter over, he decided to adopt now and then, when the chance offered, the solemn airs of a philosopher. If he could not impress his brawny charges with his size, at least he would impress them with his profundity! 'I taught my scholars as well as I could,' he wrote in his Autobiography, 'and in order to acquire some standing with them, I used to introduce philosophical questions into the lessons on rhetoric.' Cardinal Passionei, one of the

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[1] *Summarium*, n. 4.

[2] Le Bachelet, *Bellarmin avant son Cardinalat*, p. 48.

unofficial and self-constituted *advocati diaboli* already alluded to who strenuously opposed Bellarmine's beatification, professed himself horrified at such a shameful piece of bluff, but Passionei was not famous for his sense of humour.[1]

Robert's boys must have grown very fond of him, if affection is a reciprocal thing. In the sixteenth century schoolboys were a downtrodden race. Pedagogues believed devoutly in Spartan methods, and public opinion was all on their side. Even theologians and Scripture scholars went out of their way to justify the harsh measures. Bible texts which referred to the indiscipline of youth were interpreted according to the letter, as for instance, certain passages from the Book of Proverbs, from which Cornelius à Lapide drew very stern conclusions. 'A boy,' he wrote, 'is, as it were, a brute beast led by sense and not by reason, and covetous of everything he sets his eyes on. . . . Wherefore, as an ass, a horse, a mule, have their desires restrained by a rod or bludgeon, so too a boy is kept from following his silly cravings and constrained to live according to law, by the rod of discipline with which his father or master chastises him.'[2] In the fashion of the day, Aristotle's authority is invoked to bear out the strictures, but Cornelius à Lapide is mild compared to some other theorists. It is said that the Calvinists put children in prison for misbehaviour, and, in one instance, even decapitated a small boy for having struck his parents in a fit of childish anger. Certain it is that throughout Europe schoolmasters were presented with a whip on the day of their installation, as an efficacious symbol of their new office [3]—*Ferulaeque tristes, sceptra paedagogorum!* The Jesuits found this stern tradition in possession when they came on the scene and, while not doubting for a moment the necessity of corporal punishment, they certainly did their best to regulate and lessen it. *Ubi verba valent, ibi verbera non dare* became their motto. One kind-hearted man wrote in his commentary on the pathetic epigram of Martial quoted above: 'Would to God the time was at hand when ferulas might end and holidays begin for ever! But alas for our dearest wishes, boyhood is not innocent enough nor youth so tractable as to be governed by a word or a nod.'[4]

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[1] For a full account of Passionei's activities, see vol. II, ch. XXX.

[2] *Commentaria in Proverbia Salomonis. Op.* (ed. Crampon), t. VI, p. 158.

[3] Schmidt, *Geschichte der Pädagogik*, III, p. 146.

[4] Herman, *La Pédagogie des Jésuites au XVIe siècle*, p. 117.

It speaks volumes for Robert Bellarmine that he *was* able so to govern his boys. During the four years in which he had charge of them, he never once found it necessary to resort to violent measures. His attitude to the rather brutal customs of the time is made plain in a letter which he addressed to his eldest brother Thomas, in 1611. Someone had called his attention to the rough treatment meted out by their tutor to Thomas's sons, his little nephews.

> This [protested the uncle] is a great evil, because it teaches the boys to be sneaks and cowards, as St. Paul warns us, and because they get accustomed to tell lies in order to escape being beaten. Besides, the children of gentlemen ought to be led on by honourable inducements and not by fear of being flogged. I myself was a master when young in our Society, and I never inflicted corporal punishment on a single boy, nor advised others to do so. By emulation and a threat now and again, I got them on far better than some of my colleagues did, who thrashed them. St. Augustine, who also kept a school in his time, severely rebukes in his Confessions the tyranny of masters in venting their cruelty on poor little children.[1]

Such gentle and psychologically wise views were very rare in the sixteenth century. In one of the best known of his books, Bellarmine returned to the question.

> Christian parents [he wrote] should love their children with a manly and prudent love, not encouraging them if they do wrong, but educating them in the fear of God. . . . Parents who are too severe with their children and who rebuke and punish them for the tiniest misdemeanours, treat them as slaves. Such treatment will discourage them and make them hate home. . . . The right method for fathers and mothers to adopt in the education of their children, is to teach them obedience, and when they fail therein to correct them, but in such a manner as to make it quite plain that the correction proceeds from a spirit of love.[2]

Robert was obviously very fond of young people. He speaks about them often in his sermons, and nearly always in a playful or affectionate tone. 'We are all only boys,' he said once when preaching at Louvain, 'and our one hope of salvation is for each of us to keep the heart and manner of a boy.'[3] He was very much in sympathy with boyish high spirits and aspirations, only he wanted them to lay the foundations of their liberties securely, and not barter the real thing for its shadow. ‘ All men,’ he said, ‘ burn with a mighty thirst for liberty ; and that desire is not an evil but a fine thing which God will satisfy in His own good time. Our mistake is that we are in too much of a hurry, and while still only boys, want to be lording it like kings. . . . *Vanum est vobis ante lucem surgere !* Wait a little, and while small do not despise your tutors and guides. Have you not seen unfeathered nestlings that wanted to fly without wings falling to earth disastrously, or corn which sprang up before its time all withered and spoilt ? ’

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[1] Letter given in Bartoli, *Vita*, p. 52.

[2] *De Septem Verbis*, cap. ix.

[3] *Illustrissimi et Reverendissimi D. Roberti Bellarmini, Conciones habitae Lovanii* . . . Coloniae, 1626, ed., *Concio* XIII.

There was one quality which the Jesuit educationalists of the sixteenth century desired most particularly to see shine in their Order's masters—*hilaritas*. The *Ratio Studiorum* insists constantly on the necessity of a gay and good-humoured manner in school. Like St. Teresa, it has no use for ‘ sour-faced saints.’ Robert Bellarmine, as we shall see, had a great deal to do with the drawing up of the *Ratio*. Whether or not the insistence on *hilaritas* was due mainly to him, it is quite certain that his life translated that lovable virtue into concrete terms. With his favourite doctor, St. Augustine, he believed light-heartedness to be an essential note of good teaching, and in spite of his meditated little efforts to impress his boys as a philosopher, cheerfulness was always breaking in.

In the autumn of the year 1564, a certain Father Mark, who was attached to the Jesuit College in Florence, invited Robert to accompany him on a long pilgrimage to the famous sanctuaries of the Val d'Arno and Casentino. The road they took lay through Dante's country, an abominable road for motor cars but a glorious one for two wayfarers with plenty of time on their hands. It plays a never-ending game of hide and seek with the river, and along it on either side are the identical flower-enamelled meadows which Fra Angelico painted in his pictures of Heaven. At each of the sleepy towns and villages on their route, the two men halted, Robert to preach and Father Mark to hear the confessions that were the result of his efforts.[1] First they visited Vallombrosa, then thick with its famous autumnal leaves, if pine trees can be said to have leaves, and went on from there to Camaldoli. After three quiet, perfect days with the hermits, the time came to say good-bye. Suddenly, for no apparent reason at all, their

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[1] *Autobiography*, n. ix.

Padre Maggiore or Superior, ordered Robert to preach to his community. 'Pene improviso jussit,' says the Autobiography. It was a most embarrassing situation, for each of the men was old enough to be Robert's grandfather. However, the Superior would take no refusal, so 'driven to it and entirely against his will,' he began his extempore sermon. When he had finished, his venerable auditors strove in their friendly, appreciative way to kiss his hand, but at that his humility revolted and he fled. Eight miles more of the valley road and the two pilgrims were toiling up the rugged mass of Mount La Verna, to the sacred spot 4,000 feet above, where St. Francis received 'the express image and similitude of Our Lord Jesus Christ crucified.' Blessed Robert was one of those chiefly responsible for the extension of the feast of the Stigmata to the universal Church, and he chose that feast as the day on which he would like to die.[1] Yet with all his great devotion to St. Francis, he does not say a word about the visit to Alvernia in the Autobiography, beyond the bare fact of having gone there. Such reticence is typical of him.

5. Bellarmine remained only a year in Florence, and then, to the unconcealed regret and disappointment of his late fellow-workers, departed over the sea for the small university town of Mondovì in Piedmont.[2] Before leaving, he received a letter from Polanco, full of kind assurances about his new post. He was chosen for it because the Order was under a debt of gratitude to Duke Emmanuel of Savoy and could repay him in no more welcome way than by sending its best master to his dominions. The easy hours of teaching, too, 'one in the morning and another in the evening', would help Robert to keep well. Polanco's letter harps a good deal on those two hours, *ò poco piu*. Bellarmine was to be a man of leisure, he insisted, with wide pleasant spaces in his day, into which boys or other business might not intrude. But Polanco, as the sequel will show, did not understand the psychology of his Bellarmine.[3]

On the very day these instructions arrived from Rome, Robert hired a horse and set off on his long, lonely ride to the coast. He went by way of Lucca to the little seaport town of Lerici on the Gulf of Spezia, intending to take ship there for Genoa. Lerici is one of the tragic places of English literature,

[1] *Summarium*, n. 25, p. 57.
[2] Le Bachelet, *Bellarmin avant son Cardinalat*, p. 49.
[3] Le Bachelet, *l.c.*, p. 50.

for within a stone's throw of it Shelley was drowned in a sudden storm. When Bellarmine reached the town, there was a storm blowing too, into which no ship dared venture. So he had perforce to put up at the solitary inn, with all its dirt and discomfort. He was very wet and very weary, and he had no money. It was winter time, and the semi-civilized fisher-folk around him were not over particular in their treatment of stray travellers. But his poverty was his best armour, and he had, besides, the gift of making the queerest people his friends. At last a ship put out to sea and, after much heaving and tossing, landed him at Genoa, where he transferred his small belongings to another vessel bound for Savona on the coast of Piedmont. It was after his arrival there that his worst troubles began, as he had to find his way alone through the mountains. 'On this journey,' he writes in his Autobiography, 'I was many a time in great danger of both body and soul.' As instances, but only instances, he mentions that at one inn the woman of the house declared him noisily to be the long-absent husband of her daughter, while in another, a brawling fellow charged him publicly with the theft of his purse. But God protected him, he says, because he was innocent. *Deus adfuit innocenti.* How much these and similar adventures troubled his peace is evident from his concluding words: 'I firmly resolved that, if at any time I should be a Superior in the Society, I would never send out the Fathers or Brothers alone, especially if they were young, no matter how great the additional expense might be.'[1] For the rest of his life he was very shy of inns and innkeepers. His dislike of them even crept into his sermons, and at Louvain he made great congregations merry with a sarcastic description of mine host and his slippery ways. The world's delusions was his theme at the moment.

> It is like an inn [he said], this tricksy world, and especially like an Italian inn. When you are travelling and turn aside to one of these places, out runs the host to meet you, all wreathed in smiles. He almost falls on your neck in his affection. Everything of the best, he assures you, is to be found in his establishment, the best meat and wine, and the most comfortable beds. As for prices, you must not so much as mention such vulgar things. Why, friend, you are at home, he says. Use and enjoy my goods as if they were your own, and then pay me afterwards whatever you like. Next, he takes you to table and presses you, now to drink, now to eat.

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[1] *Autobiography*, n. ix.

He beams on you one minute, cracks a merry joke the next, and tells you that you are the finest fellow in the world. When supper is over, he escorts you to bed, and wishes you most graciously the sweetest of slumbers. So far, you think delightedly, this is not an innkeeper but a most dear brother whom I have found. However, next day dawns and it is time for you to go on your way. He strides up now, a changed man, and begins to reel off a list of all (and more than all) the good things which you have enjoyed. And when he has reckoned them up, he says truculently : ‘ That, Sir, is your bill.’ Perhaps you protest a little, astonished at the way it has grown, and say to him : ‘ Where, my friend, are those fair promises you made me yesterday ? ’ Then livid with rage and his eyes full of threats, he bellows at you some rubbish about tavern conventions and makes you out a despicable rogue who would eat and drink his fill and then get away scot-free. ‘ By heaven you won’t ! ’ he avers. ‘ You will pay me, sir, ay, and to the very last farthing ! ’

When Robert arrived at Mondovì, after his hundred miles of adventure by land and sea, his first care was to sit down and write Father Polanco a detailed account of his experiences.

MONDOVÌ.
23 *November* 1564.

Pax Christi. Very Reverend Father in Christ, I received your letter and read its many reasons why our Father General destined me for this College of Mondovì. Though it was my duty, and a duty to which I hope I should have been faithful, to obey without any reasons at all, I am not the less grateful to his Paternity for the kind thought he has given to my health and welfare. And indeed I was well aware of his kindness even before this new instance of it, because of the singular charity he bears towards all his sons. Now I must talk about myself and my journey. The very day I received your letter, I took to the road, and on the road I had to remain for a fortnight, owing to the bad weather. My land-journey was one of rain, mud, and snow, and my sea trip was made in a storm. To give you an idea of what travelling was like, I may say that in many places where there used to be a main road, a torrent swirled which swamped my horse up to his belly. However, I tried to be cheerful about it all, as an act of atonement for that letter of excuses which Father Alfonso and myself addressed to you.[1] The weather was beautiful, and quite perfect for travelling, during the fortnight previous to my departure from Florence. I wasted that fine opportunity, though not entirely through my own fault, and afterwards dreary and difficult days were my fitting punishment. But now, by the grace of God, here I am in Mondovì, and better in health, too, than I have been for many a year. I believe I am down to lecture on Cicero, on Monday next, the 27th of November, and before starting my course I shall have to make a little speech in praise of eloquence. I could not begin work sooner owing to my ignorance of scholastic procedure here. My commission is rather a serious burden, especially for such shoulders as mine, and to tell the truth, if I had any say in the matter I would not dare to undertake it. But as it was given to me by holy obedience, I do so most willingly, and I promise you that I will carry it out, if not as well and learnedly as another man, at any rate with no less diligence and alacrity.

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[1] Father Alfonso had suggested all kinds of ingenious reasons to the General why the College in Florence should not be deprived of Bellarmine’s services, and Robert now gallantly shoulders some of the blame attaching to his action.

As to the study of theology which your Reverence mentioned, I confess that it has great attractions for me, if I may judge by the little acquaintance which I made with it during my philosophy course. But all the same, I would not have you think that this predilection troubles me in the least. Indeed, you may be sure that I only want to do whatever holy obedience may decide, even though it should mean for me the teaching of rhetoric or some lesser subject for the rest of my days. That was my resolution when I joined the Society. I renewed it at the time of leaving Rome, and here and now I heartily renew it once more. My great wish is, as I once told Father Madrid, that if ever I should ask for a change, or anything else which appealed to me, Father General may not grant it to me out of kindness, if it be not in strict accordance with the spirit of obedience. I would far rather do the right thing against my inclinations than go wrong of my own sweet will, and that I know is impossible so long as I do what I am told.

I will tell you a little story now, as an evident proof of God's goodness to His unworthy servants. When I was on the way from Rome to Florence, and my *denari* failed, I met a Spanish gentleman who gave me all I needed without my asking him. The same thing happened to me in Lerici, where I was detained for several days by the stormy weather. Very soon my little stock of money was exhausted, as I was given only enough for a six-days journey, which would have been ample had the skies been kind. Alone, then, and penniless, in a strange land, I was at my wits' end to know what to do, when suddenly a Spanish doctor arrived at the hostelry where I was sitting racking my brains. When he discovered that I belonged to the Society, he was delighted, and supplied all my wants. He accompanied me to Genoa, too, and so God found me not only money, but a friend. Now I must stop. Forgive me, Father, if I have wearied you with my prattle, and remember me in your prayers. I commend myself humbly to the prayers of

Father General, and of all those who live with him in that holy house. May God Our Lord keep you safe and sound.

Your Reverence's Servant in Christ,
ROBERTO BELLARMINI.[1]

6. The first schools of the Jesuits had a hard struggle, not only with parliaments but with poverty. At Mondovì, the fathers were unable to buy even a pair of brass candlesticks for their altar, and had to use two bottles instead. When Polanco wrote to Florence announcing Robert's new appointment, he added in a pathetically revealing phrase that Mondovì would pay the expenses of the journey 'when it could.' [2] It was a paltry sum of a few pounds but a very big debt for men who possessed nothing. Poverty, however, had no terrors for their latest recruit, and as for hard work, the more of that that fell to him the happier he became. Idleness in its ordinary sense, the *dolce far niente* of his countrymen, was a way of life he could never comprehend. Father Polanco had promised him a quiet, restful year at Mondovì, and this is how he spent it: 'He filled practically every post, taught in the schools, read to the Fathers during meals, accompanied them on their business out of doors, preached in the church, gave the exhortations to the lay brothers, took the doorkeeper's place while he was at dinner, and also at times roused the community in the morning.' [3]

In the programme of the year's lectures, he found himself down to teach 'Demosthenes the Greek, Cicero, and some other matters.' That was a startling discovery, as the only Greek he knew was the alphabet. However, there was no way out. Demosthenes would not wait, and so with characteristic aplomb he informed his scholars one morning that he intended to refresh their knowledge of grammar before proceeding to the noble but difficult prose of the world's greatest orator. Then by a tremendous effort—*maximo suo labore*—he learned each evening in the quiet of his room the nouns or verbs or whatever it was that he had to repeat next day. Very soon he drew ahead of his boys, and was expounding to them confidently the difficult text of Isocrates. During the summer term the *Somnium Scipionis* was the appointed author, and with it he was happy, because it gave him the opportunity to introduce once again his favourite 'philosophical and astrological questions.' Astrology still held its place as a serious science in the sixteenth century. Robert's grandfather, Riccardo Cervini, who was a highly cultured and devout gentleman, had had the horoscope of his son Marcello duly cast, and firmly believed in its prognostications.[1] Robert himself, too, subscribed to that strange creed, and read widely in its literature, but the star-books in which he delighted did not include the great work of Nicholas Copernicus, though it was familiar enough in Italy. However naïve his views on astronomy may have been, he knew how to make them attractive in his lectures, with the result that many learned doctors of the University came regularly to hear him.[2]

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[1] Le Bachelet, *Bellarmin avant son Cardinalat*, pp. 52–54.

[2] Le Bachelet, *l.c.*, p. 48: 'il viatico sodisfara il collegio di Mondovì, se ben adesso sta povero, quando potra.'

[3] *Autobiography*, n. xii.

At Whitsuntide, he received an invitation to preach in the Cathedral of Mondovì, but conscious of his youth and lack of learning, he declined the honour until orders from his superiors made further refusal impossible. He preached then on three consecutive days with extraordinary success. The Rector, in a transport of enthusiasm, applied to him in his letter to Rome, the Gospel compliment, 'never man spake as this man'; superlative praise which did not appeal to Robert's sober sense of realities.[3] From this time on he became the regular Sunday preacher during his stay in the town, and won such favour that often enough the great church could not accommodate all the people who flocked to hear him.[4] He learned one very valuable lesson from his pulpit experiences there. Young and keen as he was, the false glitter of the rhetoric then popular dazzled his judgment for a time, and caused him to seek for models among preachers who bore a strong resemblance to the celebrated Friar Gerund. The learned Franciscan, Cornelius Musso, was his favourite. Bishop Cornelius won merited fame as a Scripture scholar, but in spite of Pallavicini's defence of him in his History of the Council of Trent, a modern reader must pronounce his oratory detestable. When preaching at the opening session of the Council in the presence of Cardinal Pole, he waved his hand towards that great and modest man, exclaiming: 'Behold him, venerable brethren, Reginald Pole, not so much an Angle as an Angel!' The whole sermon is full of similar instances, but the adulation is its least offence. What grates more on the reader's sensibilities is the semi-pagan spirit of the piece. Cornelius drags in the 'Ancients' whenever he sees a chance, and mixes up their tags with verses from the Psalms and Canticle of Canticles. He compares the Council to the Wooden Horse of Troy, and in the same breath adjures the forests of Trent, 'by the roes and harts of the fields, to make a great noise through the mountains unto the ends of the earth, and from the rising of the sun to the going down of the same.' What it all meant, he did not trouble to explain. '*Venimus*, *vidimus*, *vicimus*, Patres,' he said, not caring in the least whether that famous remark had anything to do with his argument.[1] In another sermon he is reputed to have spoken of Our Lord as 'dying like Hercules, rising like Apollo or Esculapius, ascending to Heaven as a true Bellerophon, a second Perseus, who had slain the Medusa that changed men into stones.' The Renaissance had run to seed, and this atrocious *stilo alto* was considered in France, Spain, and Italy to be the fine flower of the preacher's art. It continued to be popular until the Jesuit, Father de Isla, got the happy idea of laughing its extravagances out of court as Cervantes had laughed away the extravagances of chivalry.[2] But that was long after Bellarmine's day.

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[1] Pastor, *History of the Popes*, vol. XIV (Eng. tr.), p. 14.

[2] *Autobiography*, n. x.

[3] *Autobiography*, n. x.

[4] Le Bachelet, *Bellarmin avant son Cardinalat*, p. 56, note 2.

Robert found that the *stilo alto* attracted big audiences, so he succumbed to its tinsel charms. He says that he read the sermons of Bishop Cornelius carefully, and took to writing his own in imitation of them—*non sine magno labore*. On Christmas Day 1565, he preached one of these flamboyant compositions, and there is a little angry flame in his words when he tells how he wasted several days trying to get its alliterations, puns, allegories, and pedantic allusions into his memory. No sooner had he come down from the pulpit, than he was pressed by the Cathedral canons to preach for them again on the following morning. They were so insistent that he could not find it in his heart to refuse, but 'he was almost in despair, knowing that he should not have a single hour in which to memorize a new sermon.' However, on St. Stephen's day he climbed to his place as serenely as usual, and then, throwing rhetoric to the winds, spoke as his heart prompted him. There was a genuine ring about the praise which greeted him when he had done. 'Ah, Signor Roberto,' said the canons, 'up to now it was you who preached, but this morning it was an angel from Heaven.'[1] From that moment he vowed that he would never again write out any sermons except those he might have to deliver in Latin, on special occasions. He had learnt his lesson and was done with the *stilo alto* for good. At a later date, he wrote some instructions for preachers in which he denounced its flashy ways very warmly, and his own temporary concession to them took its place for ever in that sad corridor of memory where men keep their regrets. On the occasion of St. Teresa's beatification in 1614, a young Jesuit of whom Bellarmine was very fond, preached a grandiloquent panegyric of her in Naples, and sent the Cardinal a copy of the sermon. The following are some lines of the acknowledgment that he received: 'You may imagine what danger men run who preach from vanity, rather than from a good intention. I too, when I was young, composed a few sermons like those of your Reverence, as I had fallen in love with Cornelius Musso. But God, in His mercy, gave me a warning, for He caused me to produce a great sensation by a plain sermon, and from that day to this I have never gone back to my old style, and I have always been deeply sorry for what I had been doing until then. Your Reverence must pardon the liberty I take, because it springs from my love for you.'[2]

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[1] The following is the Latin text of the passage referred to above: 'Jam quis nolit in hujus concilii societatem, velut in equum Trojanum, obside ultima ista Tridentina urbe, cum principibus imperii et religionis includi? Adjuro vos Tridentini saltus *per capreas cervosque camporum, antequam aspiret dies et inclinentur umbrae* (Cant. II. 7, 17) resonare per concava montium ad extrema terrae, et a solis ortu ad occasum, ab aquilone ad meridiem cognoscant tempus visitationis suae, et se concilio conciliari.' Le Plat, *Monumentorum ad Historiam Concilii Tridentini Collectio*, I, pp. 18, 19. Louvain, 1781.

[2] De Isla's novel, *The History of the famous preacher Fray Gerundio de Campazas*, is still a classic in Spain. It brought its author all kinds of trouble, but did religion a signal service. For the burlesque preachers of Italy, cf. Tacchi Venturi, *Storia della Compagnia di Gesù in Italia*, I, pp. 246–249.

The Autobiography relates an amusing story of those strenuous days in Piedmont, 'a merry thing', which Robert says happened to him one Christmastide when he and his Rector were paying the Dominican Fathers a visit. The Prior, their host, did not know him, and never dreamt that such a shy wisp of a man could be the great preacher all Mondovì was talking about. In his hospitable way, he pressed his visitors to some refreshments. The Rector declined, and then turning to Robert with a smile, Father Prior said coaxingly as one would to a child: 'At any rate, this little brother your companion will be glad of a drink '—*bebera bene questo fratino vostro compagno*. Next day, business took the Dominican superior to the Jesuit College where Robert was on duty as porter. 'I want to see the Cathedral preacher,' announced Father Prior genially. 'I am afraid,' answered Robert, 'that the preacher cannot come, but if you like I will let him know exactly your Reverence's good pleasure.' 'No, no,' said the Prior, 'I cannot tell you my business. Either take me to the preacher, or bring him along.' 'But, Father,' protested Robert, 'have I not told you already that the preacher cannot come down?' As the Prior persisted and began to get a little heated over the matter, he felt that it was no use trying to spare his feelings any longer. 'Since you *will* have it, Father,' he said laughingly, 'I am the man you want and I could not come because I am already here.' The poor Prior grew very red at these words, and humbly asked pardon for his unintended impertinence on the previous day. But Robert quickly put him at his ease. It was only a joke after all, a small comedy of errors which they could both enjoy. Then the good man took heart and mentioned his mysterious business, which was connected with a sermon to be preached in the Dominican Church on Christmas Day. Robert said that he would most willingly undertake it, and so they shook hands and parted the best of friends.[1]

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[1] *Autobiography*, n. xi.

[2] Process of Beatification (1712), *Summarium*, n. 14, p. 37.

This is only a very trivial incident, but it illustrates the happy humility of his soul which knew how to laugh at dignity instead of standing on it, and it gives a hint too of the alert kindness that always distinguished him. He was constantly going out of his way to do people good turns. It is no wonder that the Duke of Savoy became deeply attached to him, as did the Bishop of Mondovì and his canons. To Polanco, who had been intimate with so many great and holy men, he was always 'il charissimo Roberto.' A note of real affection steals into his official style whenever he mentions him. His name occurs very often, also, in the correspondence of St. Francis Borgia, who more than once asked to be remembered to him '*in specie*,' or very particularly. Père Suau, the biographer of the Saint, says that the reason of this was '*parcequ'il aimait Robert Bellarmin avec prédilection*.'[2] Another of his great friends was Father Francis Adorno, the provincial superior in whose jurisdiction

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[1] *Autobiography*, n. xii.

[2] *Vie de St. François Borgia*, p. 389.

Mondovì lay. This wise and capable man, who, like Borgia, came of a ducal family, had been for some time the chosen counsellor of St. Charles Borromeo, and so knew what real sanctity was like. In a letter to Rome, of July 1567, he praised Robert as 'a learned man, a strong man', and then with a sudden, significant jump to the superlative degree, 'an exceedingly holy man.'[1]

7. One day in the summer of 1567, while Robert was preaching in Mondovì Father Adorno happened to be present. As the sermon went on, the Provincial became more and more convinced that he had found a born orator at last, the man of all men most needed for the great work of spiritual revival to which the Church was then dedicating her energies. Only one thing did Robert seem to lack to make him the preacher complete, and that was the authority which comes of being a priest. He had all the other gifts, the style, the eloquence, the originality, so Adorno bade him proceed at once to Padua that he might there acquire the last grace needed. Afterwards he would be able to devote his life exclusively to preaching, the work for which God had so obviously destined him.[2]

This was sad news indeed for Mondovì, where, says the record with eloquent brevity, he was *gratissimo*, everybody's favourite. His own regrets must have been tempered with pleasant expectations, for there were few cities in Italy so attractive to students as the one he was going to. The University of Padua was famous throughout Europe. Several thousand young men attended the lectures given there by the most celebrated professors of the day. And it was not only grave and sober sciences such as anatomy and law which men came to acquire, but gay accomplishments also, like dancing and the use of the foils. The devotees of these arts, who were usually wild fellows from over the seas, provided the studious city with all the excitement it needed, while on the other hand, its religious wants were amply supplied by the forty monasteries within its walls. St. Anthony's five domes brooded in benediction over the avocations of grave men and gay and, after his coming, cast their shadows at evening on the walls of the little room where Robert Bellarmine was meditating on the nature of God. He had to work out the deepest of its problems unaided, because he could not agree with the views which his Jesuit master held on predestination. Still less satisfactory was the Dominican professor, whose lectures he attended in the University schools. 'My brothers and myself,' he says, 'discovered that he was taking every word of them from Soto's treatise *De Justitia et Jure*, so we gave him up without more ado.'[1] The modern student is not permitted such large liberties in the matter of professors, but the teaching of theology was not then organized as rigidly as it is now. Men were left a good deal to their own devices, and that in the case of geniuses like Bellarmine was certainly no harm. Happy warrior that he was, he knew how to 'turn his necessity to glorious gain.' It was precisely the solitariness and independence of his studies which gave to his later work the freshness and vitality which made it famous.[2]

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[1] Le Bachelet, *Bellarmin avant son Cardinalat*, p. 57.

[2] *Autobiography*, n. xii.

But his days in Padua were not occupied altogether in study. When he had been there only a few weeks, his old love, the pulpit, claimed him again, and he was to be heard every Sunday at the Jesuit church in the city. So well known did he become that in the February of 1568 he was asked to undertake the special sermons which were customary in Venice during Carnival-time, a great honour indeed for so young a man. He went, doubtless, by a barge on the river Brenta, a method of travel which Fynes Moryson pronounced to be both interesting and comfortable. Venice, though in decline, was still a city of such charm that the English worthy thought the derivation of its name must surely be *veni etiam*, or 'come again'! John Evelyn, who visited it twenty-five years after Bellarmine's death, wrote a vivid account of the Carnival in his Diary:

> I stirred not from Padua till Shrove-tide, when all the world repair to Venice to see the folly and madnesse of the Carnevall; the women, men and persons of all conditions, disguising themselves in antiq dresses, with extravagant musiq and a thousand gambols, traversing the streetes from house to house, all places being then accessible and free to enter. Abroad, they fling eggs fill'd with sweete water, but sometimes not over sweete. They also have a barbarous custome of hunting bulls about the streetes and piazzas, which is very dangerous, the passages being generally narrow. The youth of the several wards and parishes contend in

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[1] *Autobiography*, n. xiii.

[2] Padua, strange to say, was 'full of heretics' at this time, and that Robert was already giving them much of his attention seems plain from some passages in the sermons he preached while in the city. Cf. Tacchi Venturi, *Storia*, I, p. 549, and Bellarmine's *Conciones*, 1626 ed., p. 695.

other masteries and pastimes, so that 'tis impossible to recount the universal madnesse of this place, during this time of license.[1]

The 'madness' which shocked Evelyn, though he was by no means a puritan, came to a head in the dancing. It went on all day and all night, in the houses, gardens, streets, squares, and even on the lagoons. Great, floating ballrooms were launched, followed by gondolas full of minstrels. Everybody danced and the dances were not nice. If Evelyn found them difficult to stomach, it is easy to imagine how they must have appeared to Robert Bellarmine, who used to blanch and shrink from a nasty word even, as he would from a blow. He was a very tolerant man but, from the date of his visit to Venice, he became the sworn enemy of dancing in any and every shape. The Carnival burned itself into his brain, and he denounced its licence with all the stormy, bitter eloquence of a new Savonarola. His tones were habitually gentle, but when roused he could talk exceedingly straight, as will be seen in the chapter which deals with his sermons. The one he preached at Venice made a profound impression, so that some even of the haughty, magnificent senators came to him afterwards with their congratulations, and wanted to kiss his hand.[2]

Robert began to feel, at this time, that his recurrent illnesses, fasts, and other austerities were not enough in the way of suffering. Some sharper pain was needed, he thought, to make him more like his Divine Master, and a brother scholastic who had a bad toothache recommending that form of torture eloquently, he begged God to let him, '*sperimentare il dolore del dente.*' The answer to his prayer came immediately and violently but, after enduring the torment bravely for a few hours, he decided that this cross was not the cross for him, and begged God to take back His gift as soon as ever it might please His holy will! The pain stopped then as suddenly as it had begun.[3]

During this same year, 1568, there was an exciting interlude in the round of his hard, inglorious work at Padua. A summons came to him from Genoa, where the Fathers of Piedmont and Lombardy were holding their triennial meeting, and the tenor of it was that he and another scholastic should repair to that city to give proof of their ability in a public disputation. After a long, toilsome journey by land and sea, they had, weary though they were, to defend theses selected from every part of philosophy and theology. The function took place in the grand old black and white cathedral of the city. It lasted three days, during which time rhetoric, logic, physics, metaphysics, and astronomy were all eagerly discussed. The entire *Summa* of St. Thomas was on the programme too, an item that is more a library than a book. Robert had been studying it systematically only for six months, but for years before he must have spent much time browsing privately in its pages. It is quite certain that even at this early date he had read a great deal of St. Augustine, and read it to such purpose that he could venture to pit his own interpretation of the great Doctor's thought against the teaching of his professor. The official account of the disputation in Genoa is given in the annual letters of the Jesuit College there, and runs as follows :

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[1] Evelyn's Diary (Chandos Library edition), pp. 173–174.

[2] *Autobiography*, n. xiii. It may be well to remind the reader again that the Autobiography was written at the urgent request of two dear friends and was intended for their eyes alone. Its publication was due to the demands of a famous *advocatus diaboli*.

[3] Robert's great friend, Andrew Eudaemon-Joannes, related this story about him during the process of his Beatification. *Summarium*, num. 29, § 11.

> On three successive afternoons our scholastics publicly defended their theses in the Cathedral, to the great admiration and delight of an audience composed of most grave, learned, and religious men, in addition to many others. So much astonishment did they show, that what was once said of Our Lord might well seem to have been said of our scholastics too : *Unde hi litteras sciunt cum non didicerint?* For it is not generally known that our Society is heartily devoted to the serious sciences. Men think that we find our delight only in literary work, because here as everywhere else we take such pains to ground boys well in letters. . . . On the first and second days of the disputation, one of our brothers [Robert Bellarmine] was the defendant. The third day, another relieved him. They both argued so solidly and learnedly in exposing and defending their theses, that they won the whole-hearted applause of every man present . . . and raised high hopes throughout the city that one day they would shine as stars of the first magnitude in the Society's firmament, both for piety and learning. While they themselves made light of their achievement, men of sound taste and sober judgment esteemed it immensely, so much beauty was there in the style of their discourse, and such balance and lucidity in its argument. Though before this time our Fathers were liked and respected in this Republic, we understand that they are now dearer than ever to all its citizens.[1]

Robert, of course, had to preach before leaving the city.

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[1] Le Bachelet, *Bellarmin avant son Cardinalat*, pp. 58–59.

As he was very tired and had no time to prepare a sermon of his own, he decided that he might lawfully appropriate one of St. Basil's. 'I knew,' he said, 'that there would not be many men in my audience sufficiently well-read to detect the theft.'[1] Some exigent moralists, among whom was the bitter and humourless Cardinal Passionei, have denounced this manœuvre as a gross literary felony. 'Bellarmine,' wrote the last named censor, 'lacked a virtue which even the pagans possessed and preached to the world.'[2] But Robert had St. Augustine on his side, an authority worth a whole army of Passioneis. The Saint in his treatise on Christian Doctrine defends sermon-borrowing provided there be no active deception. You must not announce that you are the author of the piece, but neither need you go out of your way to make it clear that you are not. 'When true believers,' says the holy Doctor, 'render this service to true believers, both parties speak what is their own, for God is theirs to whom belongs all that they say ; and even those who could not themselves have composed their discourse, make it their individual property by composing their lives in harmony with its lessons.'[3] Robert Bellarmine's life was certainly 'composed in harmony' with the noble teaching of St. Basil.

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[1] *Autobiography*, n. xiv.

[2] *Votum Cardinalis Dominici Passionei*, New edition, Rome, 1920, p. 240.

[3] *De Doctrina Christiana*, lib. IV, c. xxix. Migne, P.L. 34, 119.

CHAPTER IV

LEARNED LOUVAIN

1. Obedience, as St. Ignatius understood it, is a very great virtue and the flower of many virtues. The man who possesses it in its fullness must needs be a truly humble, mortified lover of God, for it is nothing else but the substitution of God's will at the centre of life instead of one's own. Robert Bellarmine's spirit of obedience seems to have astonished even the companions of St. Ignatius. At any rate, the Roman letters constantly signalize his "prontezza alla obedienza.'[1] He never seemed to mind where he was or what he was doing. God was everywhere, and His service had as wide a sweep as the activities of the world. With that light-hearted *insouciance* of the saints for a philosophy, he was not startled when news reached him in October, 1568, that he was to become an exile from his native land.

Just then he was at the height of his reputation in Padua, but Father Polanco told him that his sermons were needed more in half-heretical Belgium than in orthodox Italy. Louvain, 'the Athens of Brabant,' was his destination.

> While finishing your studies at the University there [the letter went on] you will be able at the same time to do something for your neighbour with the help of God. That something is to preach each Sunday in Latin to the undergraduates, as Fathers Strada, Ribadeneira, and Niza did in the past. These men made such an impression by their discourses that urgent appeals are now coming from Louvain for another of our theologians to perform similar services. . . . The lot has fallen upon you, Carissime. So prepare to set out at once. Please God we shall see you again in this part of the world in three years' time, a better scholar than ever, advanced in holiness and prudence, and versed in the customs of many lands. . . . Father General sends you his blessing, and all of us our kindest remembrances. . . .[2]

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[1] Cf. Le Bachelet, *Bellarmin avant son Cardinalat,* pp. 50, 61, 65, etc.

[2] Le Bachelet, *l.c.*, pp. 60–61.

The Paduan Fathers were very grieved, and also, it would seem, rather angry when they heard the bad news. What right had Louvain to steal the most promising man in all their Province? They accordingly made use of every legitimate device they could think of to save the situation. A medical veto against the proposed journey to Belgium was obtained and dispatched to St. Francis Borgia by Robert's Provincial, Father Adorno. The doctors were of opinion, it ran, that he would never get across Switzerland alive during the winter and, even if he did, his broken health would not long stand the strain of the rough Belgian régime. Besides all this, Padua had its own claims. The Church there would be left forlorn and preacherless if Robert were taken away. Other letters of respectful protest poured into Rome too, and the result of them was that the evil day of departure was postponed. When the man most concerned heard of these various manœuvres, he wrote to St. Francis on his own account, assuring him that personally he was quite ready and willing to start at a moment's notice. He was told, however, that he might go on with his studies and his sermons until the winter was over.[1]

Little controversies of this kind sprang up quite frequently round the person of Bellarmine. He seemed infinitely adaptable, the man for any task. During his life as a Jesuit he filled every office in the Order except that of General and, in the Church, he was practically everything in turn except Pope. It was this all-round ability, this plasticity of genius, which gave rise again and again to pleadings and protests when superiors thought it necessary to remove him from one house to another. Whatever he was given to do he did so well that to change him seemed like tempting Providence. Wherever he was sent he became so loved and honoured and indispensable that he could not be surrendered without argument. Daniel Bartoli, a cautious and critical historian, was the author of several excellent biographies of famous Jesuits, and consequently the following words of his have a special point. 'I certainly know of no other great man amongst us, in those days when great men were plentiful, who was so much sought after and coveted as Bellarmine, and that, too, by people in far distant places, though he was quite young and not yet a priest. Nor, on the other hand, can I remember anyone who was more jealously guarded by those who had the good fortune to possess him, so much so that they were prepared when arguments and entreaties failed to resort to something like violence rather than give him up.'[1] Hardly had Robert arrived in Louvain, some months after the time of which we are now speaking, when we find the Rector of the great College of Clermont in Paris (a Scotsman, by the way!) making unblushing overtures to the General with a view to getting him transferred there. When the Superior at Louvain heard of the proposal, he said roundly that he was amazed at some people's impudence, and implored St. Francis Borgia not to deprive Belgium of one who had become already the source of so much good.[2]

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[1] Le Bachelet, *Bellarmin avant son Cardinalat*, pp. 58, note 1 : 64, note 2 ; *Autobiography*, n. xv.

Meanwhile, Robert continued his daily round at Padua. He was given a new and better master to help him with his theology, and the sermons went on apace. But with the coming of spring Polanco was again on his track. It was high time for him to be off, the Rector was told. Louvain was waiting. Would he then kindly provide the wayfarer with a horse, a felt cloak, and a stout pair of boots for his long journey. He need not break his heart over the loss of Robert, as the General intended to send some 'bonissimo suggetto' to Padua, in his stead. As for the question of health, the Rector must know that Louvain was not the North Pole. On the contrary, it was a very pleasant place, and there were plenty of good doctors there, Robert's new superior being one of them. The journey would probably do his health a great deal of good, as he would get plenty of exercise and be diverted by his experiences of new lands and peoples.[3] Father Polanco wrote twice to the Provincial of the Belgian or Lower-German Province, urgent anxious letters which show better than anything the consideration in which Robert was held.

> He is a man of great holiness and learning [says the Secretary], but his health is very poor and he will need special treatment. Will your Reverence please take great care of him as his goodness deserves, and also as a tribute to the dear memory of his uncle Pope Marcellus. The Fathers of Lombardy were very sorry indeed to part with him, because he is so highly gifted. But our Father General was anxious to give of his best to Louvain.[4]

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[1] *Vita*, p. 61.
[2] Le Bachelet, *Bellarmin avant son Cardinalat*, p. 72, note 5.
[3] Le Bachelet, *l.c.*, pp. 62, 64.
[4] Le Bachelet, *l.c.*, p. 63.

Father Schipmann, the Rector of Louvain, was also carefully instructed in his duties: ‘ Father General recommends Master Robert to your Reverence’s charity as he is not strong and needs a good deal of care. . . . If your beer does not agree with him, will you please see that he has a little wine, and if he finds he cannot manage the coarse salted meat of your country, kindly treat him to a little good, fresh meat.’ Polanco was plainly determined that his ‘ carissimo Roberto ’ should not starve! He mentions the bread, too, in another letter, and says that Robert must have the Italian kind, and not the heavy, dark stuff—‘ il pane nero ’—with which the Belgians contented themselves.[1]

At long last, in the month of May, the subject of all this correspondence managed to escape from Padua. The journey before him was full of perils at the best of times, but just then it was doubly dangerous as the highroad into Belgium was black with the Protestant troops of Wolfgang, Duke of Zwei-Brucken. An itinerant Jesuit might expect very short shrift at their hands. Robert sought the strength and courage he needed where they could best be found. ‘ He betook himself to the Blessed Sacrament and there most heartily offered to God his life and the vicissitudes of his journey.’ Then he went on alone to Milan to meet his brother-Jesuit, Father Dulio, who was also going to Belgium. To their great delight they were joined by Dr. William Allen, the future Cardinal, two other Englishmen, and an Irishman. They travelled in disguise, but they had no big adventures beyond the inevitable hardships of a journey across the Alps in the sixteenth century. Providence watched over the devoted little band, each man of which had left home and friends and country to serve Its purposes.

Towards the end of May the many spires of learned Louvain came into view. Robert was in a gay mood when he dismounted at the door of the Jesuit College, and said laughingly to the Rector: ‘ Father General has sent me to you for two years, but I am going to remain seven.’ Why he made that remark he could never explain. ‘ It just came into his head.’ [2] But whether a prophecy or merely a wonderful guess, seven years was exactly the length of his stay.

2. Very soon after arrival, he settled down to his twofold work of studying and preaching. The public lectures on

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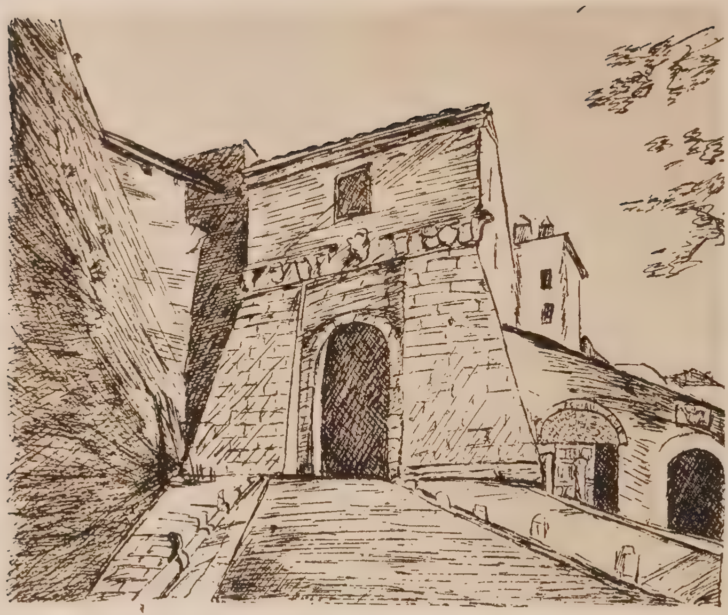
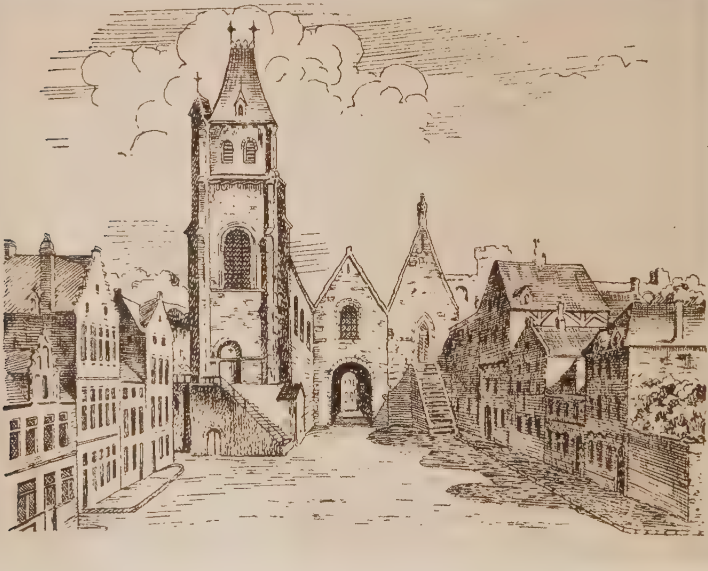
[1] Le Bachelet, *Bellarmin avant son Cardinalat*, pp. 64, 67–68.

[2] *Autobiography*, n. xvi





TWO ARCHWAYS IN BELLARMINE'S STORY.

Above, the Porta al Prato, Montepulciano, through which as a boy he passed to play. Below, the archway of St. Michel, Louvain, through which as a man he passed to preach. This sketch of St. Michel is from an old engraving. The Church itself was pulled down after Bellarmine's time.

theology, which eminent professors delivered in the halls of the great Catholic University, added new zest to his pursuits. Louvain was the breakwater of the counter-Reformation against which the invading tides of heresy dashed ceaselessly for many a year. Consequently its intellectual life had a martial air quite different from the placid content of Italian centres of learning. Had Robert Bellarmine stayed at home, he would probably never have written the Controversies.

On July 25 he gave his first sermon in the town. It was in the big parochial Church of St. Michael, and there was a large audience of University men, curious to hear what the young Jesuit from Italy had to say for himself. His appearance aroused much comment, as he wore no stole and looked a mere boy in comparison with the other distinguished *conférenciers*, to whose post he succeeded. Robert himself was quite conscious of these disabilities, and began his sermon with a very charming and disarming little apology for them. He said that he felt like the effigy which David's wife put in his bed to save him from the murderous daggers of King Saul. ' You have come here to-day, dear brethren, in great numbers to hear a man preach the word of God. But I greatly fear that you may find a doll instead of a man. . . . However, if the same Holy Spirit who loosens the lips of the dumb and makes babes and sucklings eloquent, deigns to dwell in me, a mere man of straw, then indeed will my words make you happy, and serve splendidly the interests of your souls.' [1]

The crowds that packed the church for this and subsequent sermons were not all learned Latinists. Ordinary men and women came too, the proverbial butchers and bakers and candlestick-makers. We might wonder what profit they could reap by listening to sounds that had as little meaning for them as the whistling of the wind. But as a matter of fact, they were not entirely Latinless. Sermons in that language were a famous and long-standing institution in Louvain. Many years earlier, Francis Strada, the Chrysostom of the infant Society of Jesus, had started the custom, and to him succeeded the ' beloved disciple ' of Jesuit history—Pedro Ribadeneira. Louvain was the Mecca of Catholic scholarship in this age, and students thronged to it from so many lands that gradually the town was forced to think in terms of the world. The government officials found Latin a necessity in order to be able to deal with the cosmopolitan population, while the shrewd shopkeepers and *maîtres-d'hôtel* saw that a little of it might be a good business investment. The Latin that thus became diffused was certainly not of the Augustan kind, but it sufficed to enable ordinary men and women to understand the drift of a straightforward sermon.[1]

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[1] *Conciones habitae Lovanii*, ed. 1a Coloniae, 1615, p. 331.

Robert had a great tradition to live up to. Many of those who came to hear him had listened to the triumphant oratory of Strada and Ribadeneira, and so were in expectation of stirring eloquence. They were not disappointed, for the fresh, eager accent of the young stranger from over the Alps captivated them immediately. 'So compelling was the power of his genius,' says a contemporary record, 'that it drew vast crowds around him, and caused his preaching to bear fruits almost beyond belief.'[2] In 1570, the Belgian Provincial reported that the sermons were attended by thousands at a time.[3] There were three great open spaces near the church, and these were invariably so packed, whenever Robert was advertised, that the people of Louvain used to wonder where on earth such huge masses of men had sprung from.[4]

Leaving for another section the study of the sermons as a whole, we may here quote one or two individual impressions of them. Father Thomas Sailly, who afterwards became a very distinguished Jesuit army-chaplain, was a young student at the University when Bellarmine began his course.

> I heard him before he was a priest [Sailly testified]. It was at St. Michael's in the presence of an incredibly large gathering of learned men. He preached in such a way that he seemed to many like an angel in the pulpit, and with such persuasive power as constantly to induce six or seven or sometimes fifteen students to abandon the vanities of the world. On one occasion he spoke for two hours without a break, and yet not a single man in the huge audience grew tired. It was then that he predicted the ruin which was to come upon Belgium. After the sermon, a number of confessors were kept busily at work landing with God's nets fishes of no ordinary size. During it, you could see most people with note books taking down every word.[5]

Andrew Wyse of Waterford, who became English Grand Prior of the Knights of Malta, was another of Robert's auditors who left sworn testimony to the effect of his preaching. It was common knowledge in Louvain at the time, according to this witness, that many Protestants were coming all the way from England for the sole purpose of hearing the famous orator. And it was common knowledge, too, that many of them were, in consequence, forsaking their errors. 'Now an old man, I solemnly swear that while Bellarmine was speaking, his face appeared to me lit up like the face of an angel.'[1] The impression thus created was so deep as to outlast many a bitter, effacing year of warfare and civil strife. When Cardinal Bentivoglio was nuncio in Flanders nearly half a century afterwards, he found the sermons still a vivid memory among the people.[2] But perhaps the most striking testimony of all is that contained in a letter which the Professors of the Louvain theological faculty addressed to Pope Clement XI in 1713, begging him to raise Robert to the altars. It runs as follows:

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[1] Cf. J. M. Prat, *Vie de Père Ribadeneira*, pp. 107–108.

[2] Le Bachelet, *Bellarmin avant son Cardinalat*, p. 67, note 2.

[3] Le Bachelet, *l.c.*, p. 75.

[4] *Autobiography*, n. xxii.

[5] *Annuaire de l'Université Catholique de Louvain*, 1841, p. 169.

> Among the wonderful things which by the grace of God Bellarmine achieved here, in the first flower of his youth, were his Latin sermons, sermons all on fire with the Divine spirit, and as full of true piety as of learning. So large were his audiences that even the vast spaces of the Church could not accommodate them, and such was his success that many men were brought back to the true faith, particularly when, during the octave of Corpus Christi, he demonstrated in the clearest and amplest fashion the real presence of Christ in the Holy Eucharist. . . . His profound erudition, his singular modesty, his uprightness of life, and his sweetness of disposition won for him the love and veneration of the Masters of this our University, and these sentiments have endured down to this very day.[3]

Robert in the pulpit and Robert on the ground appeared to be two different people. When preaching he looked a tall, striking figure and, as most men saw him only at such times, the story got about in Louvain that a young giant had come forth from Italy to instruct them in the word of God.[4] In reality he was undersized, and would have been quite lost in the huge, enveloping pulpits of Flanders had he not by taking thought found a simple means of adding cubits to his stature. He stood upon a stool. This device led to an amusing encounter. The parochial church was a long way from the Jesuit house, and as Robert tramped there one day to preach, he got into conversation with a 'grave-looking gentelman' who was going in the same direction. This gentleman did not recognize the tall, distinguished orator in the little cleric at his side, and talked about the sermons at St. Michael's with the greatest enthusiasm. Who was this wonderful Bellarmine? he asked; where did he come from, what was his age, under whom had he studied? The answers he received were rather vague and unhelpful, so at length turning to his small companion, he said somewhat irritably: 'Sir, you are going much too slow; if you don't mind, I must hurry on as I want to secure a place.' 'Just as you please,' answered Robert, 'but I'm all right, as there's sure to be room for a little fellow like me.'[1]

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[1] *Relatio Alberti Cardinalis Cavalchini, in Causa Beatificationis Ven. Servi Dei Roberti Cardinalis Bellarmini*, Rome, 1753, § 69(c).

[2] Bentivoglio, *Opere storiche*, Milan, 1807, vol. v, p. 122.

[3] *Epistolae pro causa Beatificationis Bellarmini*, Epist. xxxiii.

[4] 'Exierat vox per oppidum, venisse ex Italia procerum juvenem, ut conciones latinas haberet.'

After his very first sermon in Louvain, the Provincial of the Low Countries wrote to St. Francis Borgia, suggesting his immediate ordination. 'Everybody desired it,' the letter ran—*optamus omnes illi sacerdotium*.[2] In October, the answer came that the great event might take place as soon as was convenient, but beforehand Robert was to be professed of the three solemn vows in compliance with the regulations of Pope Pius V.[3] On 6 January 1570, he pronounced the vows in the chapel of the Jesuit College, and eleven weeks later, on Holy Saturday, Cornelius Jansens, the Bishop of Ghent, made him a priest.[4] What he thought about the new, solemn trust that God then committed to his keeping, is evident in many an eloquent passage of his writings. 'The whole purpose and point of being a priest,' he said in one place, 'is to offer perpetually to God a sacrifice of praise in the name of the Christian people. A priest is, as it were, a soldier on guard, with a sacred duty to protect the Church's camp by his vigils and prayers.'[5] We have seen already some indications of the part praise played in his own service of Almighty God, and we shall see very many more. As for the other Pauline idea of a priest being a soldier, it will predominate throughout the rest of this book. Shortly after his ordination Father Bellarmine, as we may now call him, devoted a whole sermon to the dignity of the priesthood. Round about him there were many who, forgetful of their high calling, allowed themselves to become entangled in worldly affairs.

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[1] *Autobiography*, n. xxii.

[2] Le Bachelet, *Bellarmin avant son Cardinalat*, p. 68.

[3] St. Pius had decreed in 1568 that religious men must take their solemn vows before being ordained. The result of this, in Bellarmine's case, was that he made a double profession, one of three vows prior to ordination, and another of four after it. The Jesuits were exempted from this law at a later date by Pope Gregory XIII.

[4] Cornelius Jansens, Bishop of *Ghent*, not his more famous namesake of Ypres, the eponymous hero of Jansenism.

[5] *De Verbo Dei*, lib. II, cap. xvi.

> Let such men think in their hearts a little [he said], and hear God's own voice speaking to them : I have exalted thee and desired thee to be not an angel only but a god among men. I have made thee the shepherd and ruler of My people. To thee I have committed all My goods, My wealth, My honour, My Spouse, Myself. . . . . I have entrusted thee with the keys of the Kingdom of Heaven, with the Sacraments which I paid for with My Blood, with My Body and Blood themselves, with the souls affianced to Me in baptism, for whom I did not hesitate to suffer and die. And I have put My honour and glory in thy hands, desiring to have My praise by thee and through thee and in thee. . . .[1]

3. At the time of Bellarmine's arrival in Louvain, the University, which had played so glorious a part in the great Catholic renaissance, was going through a dangerous domestic crisis. For this, its famous alumnus, Dr. Michael de Bay, was responsible. De Bay or Baius, as he is usually called, had spent the greater part of his studious and eminently respectable life at the University. But the Chancellor, Ruard Tapper, to whose post he succeeded afterwards, detected at the outset a flaw in his otherwise blameless character. ' Beaucoup d'esprit et d'étude, avec un grand penchant pour la nouveauté ' was this man's considered estimate of him.[2] More of a humanist than a theologian, Dr. Michael's pet aversion was scholasticism in every shape and form though, as was the case with so many of his glib predecessors, the contempt he expressed for the medieval doctors was not bred of any notable familiarity with their writings. He took St. Paul and St. Augustine for his chosen guides, and professed to find in them a series of propositions which were quite at variance with Catholic teaching on grace and free-will. In 1567, Pope St. Pius V condemned seventy-nine of these. The Bull did not mention the Doctor's name, out of simple charity, and like most documents of its kind spoke ' right on,' without any punctuation or divisions. Its key-sentence became famous.

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[1] *Conciones habitae Lovanii, Concio* VIII.

[2] J. B. du Chesne, *Histoire du Baianisme*, Douay, 1731, p. 6.

' These opinions,' it ran, ' although tenable to a certain extent in the strict and proper meaning of the words intended by those who wrote them we condemn as heretical and erroneous.' It makes a great deal of difference to the meaning of this pronouncement whether a comma be placed after the word ' extent ' or lower down, after the word ' them.' If put in the first position, the condemnation of Baius and his friends is clearly expressed, but if in the second, there was a good chance left them of arguing their way out of the tight corner in which they were placed. The result was that a controversy arose concerning this *comma pianum* which resembled on a small scale the fierce debates of earlier times about an iota.[1]

> I found the schools in a state of great excitement [Bellarmine reported]. Ravesteyn in his lectures, and the Franciscan Godfrey of Liege in his sermons, openly attacked the teaching of Dr. Michael. But all the same, a large section of the University adhered to him, and defended his views publicly and privately. On 16 November 1570, the Bull of Pope Pius V was promulgated in the schools, Dr. Michael being present as well as the other doctors and students. These men were required to take an oath of obedience to the Bull and did so, but not without a great deal of moaning. Michael himself was in tears.[2]

Sound teaching was not likely to thrive in an atmosphere so stormy, and consequently the same year the Jesuits applied for permission to open a theological course of their own. It was granted without difficulty, a ready concession due in some measure to the respect in which Father Bellarmine was held by all parties. He was appointed at once to be the first Jesuit professor in Louvain, though he had given only a bare three years to the study of theology and even during that brief novitiate had had but little systematic tutoring. At the same time, the Provincial made him prefect of studies, consultor, and spiritual director of the College, his age then being some months short of twenty-eight.[3]

The new professor delivered his first public lecture on 17 October 1570. There were nearly a hundred students in his classroom, men of all nations and types, and some doubtless as old as or older than himself. It required courage of no mean order to face such a critical, expectant audience. Father Robert found it as usual in prayer. Obedience was the rock on which he built his confidence. He had not asked nor wanted to be a professor; that was God's doing and so, ‘casting all his care upon Him,’ he plunged boldly into the first part of St. Thomas's *Summa*.[1] The official text-book in the theological schools of the University, as in all the other great centres of Catholic learning, was the *Liber Sententiarum* of Peter the Lombard, but the Society of Jesus, while allowing that famous master a certain authority, had adopted St. Thomas as its doctor of doctors and made his teaching law from the beginning.[2] There will be occasion to discuss this point in a subsequent chapter. Father Robert being a shrewd connoisseur of fine qualities in exposition and argument, naturally had the profoundest admiration for the Angel of the Schools. At the outset of his lectures on the Blessed Trinity he made public profession of his faith in the *Summa*. ‘St. Thomas,’ he said, addressing his scholars, ‘puts everything before us with such order, ease, and brevity, that I guarantee a man will never again find difficulties about the Holy Trinity in Scripture, the Councils, or patristic literature, after once studying diligently the little St. Thomas has to say on the subject. Any one among you will make more all-round progress in two months devoted to the *Summa*, than in several months' independent study of the Bible and the Fathers.'[3]

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[1] Du Chesne, *Histoire du Baianisme*, pp. 119 seq., and *in fine*, Eclaircissements : Lettres I–III, pp. 3–23.

[2] Le Bachelet, *Bellarmin avant son Cardinalat*, pp. 117–118.

[3] Le Bachelet, *l.c.*, p. 73 : Letter of Father Coster to St. Francis Borgia, 4 June 1570. *Autobiography*, n. xviii.

Four manuscript volumes of the young professor's Louvain lecture notes are preserved in the archives of the Society of Jesus. They contain more than fifteen hundred double-column pages, every line of which is written in Bellarmine's own neat but rather illegible hand. He follows St. Thomas question by question, explaining, developing, supplementing him all the time. The reading involved in the preparation of these notes must have been stupendous, and they give us the first strong hint of what went on behind the placid, outward scenes of their author's unpretentious history. He seems to have had all the Fathers at his finger tips. When he quotes St. Augustine in support of an opinion, he is not content with two or three references, but gives no less than thirteen or eighteen.[1] And that is typical of his generous erudition all through. His teaching is wonderfully clear and concrete, lit up constantly by striking examples, and expressed in a style so lucid that anyone could follow it. It is plain that he hated the charlatanism of catch-phrases, and made sure that his men trafficked in ideas and not in words. To achieve this, he used to pile illustration upon illustration until the veriest blockhead could not help grasping the precise shade of meaning attached to a particular word. Thus he quotes Virgil, Juvenal, Cicero, Suetonius, the Book of Machabees and St. Paul, to show exactly how the Latin verb *destinare* must be understood. When he gives a definition he is careful to explain every syllable of it, pointing out the precise importance of each element and the close relation of one to another. The days he had spent over Aristotle's *Organon* were not in vain. He considered no pains too great, no labour too hard, for the sake of the men God had committed to his charge. And the lectures had, too, the live note which characterizes all good teaching. They were never heavy or dull or muddled, no matter now difficult the subject under discussion might be. His learning was so much a part of him, and worn through life with such easy grace that it seemed something infused rather than acquired, the result, as someone said, of inspiration rather than perspiration. As a disputant he was splendid, and loved the quick give and take, the thrust and parry of a set argument. Father Ribadeneira, who visited Padua shortly after Robert's departure, told St. Francis Borgia regretfully, that with him had gone all the life of the school. The theological 'circles,' as they were called, had either been dropped completely or were divested of the *joie de bataille* which had made them so fresh when he was in charge of the attack or defence.[2] Cardinal Bentivoglio, in his 'Recollections,' is another witness to the same kind of energetic and infectious enthusiasm that made the lectures bright. People, he said, were very puzzled to know which was greatest, Bellarmine's fine oratory in the pulpit or his manner in the professor's chair.[3]

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[1] *Autobiography*, n. xviii.

[2] *Constitutiones Societatis Jesu*, New ed. Rome, 1908, p. 153: ‘In theologia, legetur Vetus et Novum Testamentum et doctrina scholastica divi Thomae. . . . Praelegetur etiam Magister Sententiarum.’

[3] Quoted by Père Le Bachelet from Bellarmine's autograph, *Bellarmin avant son Cardinalat*, p. 506, note 1.

It is hardly surprising, in view of all this, that his fame should soon have spread beyond the borders of Belgium. Octavius

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[1] Cf. Le Bachelet, *Auctarium Bellarminianum*, pp. 41, 45.

[2] *Monumenta Historica Societatis Jesu*, Ribadeneira, vol. I, p. 669.

[3] *Opere Storiche*, vol. v, p. 122.

Bandini, who was raised to the purple for his merit and learning, related that, when he was a young man and about to begin his theological studies, Cardinal Commendone had recommended him strongly to go to Louvain and follow Father Bellarmine's course, as that young Jesuit was considered to be one of the first doctors of the day—*che era tenuto uno di primi dottore di quel tempo*.[1] At the English College in Douay, the authorities were so impressed by the reports which reached them that they procured a copy of Bellarmine's lecture notes and had them dictated to their students. The second Diary of the College, under date March 1577, has the following entry: 'Dr. Allen, the President, gave instructions for Dr. Wright to dictate to us at six o'clock in the morning after Mass, and Dr. Bristow at eight o'clock, the learned, concise, and easily intelligible commentaries on the *prima secundae* and *secunda secundae* of St. Thomas, which the Reverend Father Robert of Italy delivered not long since in Louvain.'[2]

4. The lectures of Father Robert of Italy possessed not only brilliant qualities, but rarer ones, such as courtesy and tact. In this, as in other respects, he was very like his great master St. Thomas. St. Thomas once had a famous brush with the fire-eating English Franciscan, John Peckham, who assailed him with swelling and sounding words. 'Yet not once did Thomas lose his temper,' says his biographer, 'but always answered the said John charitably and sweetly. And thus did the said Thomas do in all disputations however sharp and heated they might be.'[3] For one brusque opponent that tested the patience of St. Thomas, there were in Robert Bellarmine's life a hundred, and the first of them all was no less a person than Dr. Michael Baius himself. Owing to the official position which he held, Bellarmine felt it his duty to take Baius and his party to task, as Papal condemnation had by no means ended their evasive activities. He went to work with great caution, well aware that a single tactical blunder might bring down on himself and his brethren the wrath of the entire University. Baius was the most eminent of its doctors, and good Catholics remembered that he had sat as a delegate at the Council of Trent. A man with such a distinguished personal record might not be attacked lightly, and the youthful David of the Jesuit College was certainly shoulder-

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[1] *Summarium*, n. 28. Testimonio del Signor Cardinal Bandino.

[2] *Records of the English Catholics: Douay Diaries*, London, 1878.

[3] *Acta Sanctorum*, March, vol. 1, p. 712.

ing a heavy responsibility when he began gathering pebbles for his sling, there in the camp of the Philistines.

The first thing Father Robert did was to form a batch of his own pupils into a sort of 'secret service,' who were to keep him acquainted with the moves of the enemy. These young men attended the lectures of Dr. Michael, and reported that not only was he at sea on the vital questions of grace and free-will, but that he held views on Papal authority which were liberal in the extreme. Father Harlemius, another professor at the Jesuit Scholasticate, told Bellarmine that he had heard the Doctor remark one day: 'For all anybody knows, the Pope of Rome may very well be Antichrist.' He was in the habit of calling his opponents heretics, a foible that made Bellarmine curious enough to get someone to inquire of the distinguished but gloomy Dean why he so labelled them. The answer he received was: 'Because you do not consider all the works of unbelievers to be sins.' Every line which Baius wrote was carefully studied by his Jesuit critic, who then drew up a long list of the errors he discovered, and refuted them one by one. But he never published his refutation, and in his lectures refrained from declaring open war on the innovators. In the circumstances, he decided that his best plan would be to undermine their system, as it were by proxy. There was a glint of battle in his eye whenever heresies allied to Baianism turned up in a *videtur quod non* of St. Thomas, but throughout the course of his excellently managed campaign he never once mentioned the Doctor by name. He was very generous too, behind the scenes, in praise of his good qualities. 'The aforesaid Michael,' he wrote in an official report, 'is a man of great ability, and most learned in the study of St. Augustine. Furthermore, he seems to be a prudent, pious, and singularly humble scholar.' Baius was the real father of Jansenism, and it is interesting to find a Jesuit thus early in the field against that deadly foe of Catholic devotion.[1]

More than forty years after the date of the Louvain lectures, a converted Calvinist named Peter Cudsem wrote to their author, requesting permission to have them printed from a manuscript copy which was preserved at Cologne. He received the following rather disconcerting reply from Bellarmine, then a famous Cardinal:

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[1] The documents bearing on this matter are given in Le Bachelet, *Bellarmin avant son Cardinalat*, pp. 111–120.

Your affection for me makes you admire and think important anything that comes from my pen. But as a matter of fact, these notes on the *Summa* of St. Thomas are imperfect, incomplete, and to my mind, not worth publishing. They are imperfect because they do not contain all that I said when lecturing, being only a résumé. They are incomplete because there are two lacunae, one at the beginning of the *Prima Secundae*, and another and larger one at the end of part three. Finally, they are not worth publishing because they are the notes of a young man who had not only to teach a class, but also to preach to the people, offices which singly would have been work enough for an individual. What you said in your letter made me afraid that some good men might want, in spite of me, to have the notes printed and published. I therefore sought out the Holy Father, and asked authorization to write in his name to the Apostolic Nuncio at Cologne, instructing him to forbid all the printers of that city, under pain of excommunication, to put these commentaries on the *Summa* in print, unknown to me and without my permission. And would you, my very loving brother, oblige me by taking the enclosed letter to his Reverence, the Nuncio.[1]

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[1] Letter of April 1617, given in French. Le Bachelet, *Auctarium Bellarminianum.* Préface Générale, p. ii.

CHAPTER V

EX ABUNDANTIA CORDIS

1. Books of Sermons are not an attractive form of literature. They belong, as a rule, to the category of 'books that are no books,' and soon fall into oblivion if they have not been written to be read rather than spoken. Sermons so written can hardly claim to be sermons at all. The real sermon often reads badly because it was meant for the ear rather than the eye. A great orator is not dependent for his effects on the beauty of his style. He has other resources, his eyes, his hands, the tones of his voice, the passion in his heart. And it is the evanescence of these things that makes a tragedy of his art. Painters and sculptors can mould their thought into imperishable forms, the emotions once awakened by great music or poetry can be awakened again by re-reading the poem or re-playing the music, but the sorrow or hope or resolution which were kindled by the living voice, are not to be recaptured from a printed record. When the orator dies he dies in a real sense for ever. He himself is his art, and the cold prose of his speech, as set down in books, is only its far-away and lifeless echo.

To judge by the results which Bellarmine obtained from his preaching, he must have been an orator of very great power, but his sermons do not, on the whole, make pleasant reading. They are too rhetorical for modern taste, too much in the tradition of Aristotle and Quintilian, with their proems and enthymemes and perorations. We know only by report the bright genius that made these dead cinders of speech once dance and sparkle like a flame, but, dry and dull though they may appear, they still hold many a clue to the character of the man who pronounced them, and for that reason, if for no other, are deserving of consideration.[1] To read his Autobiography, one would think that preaching was the main business of his life.[1] The pulpit had irresistible attractions for him all his days, and the reason of this was his burning desire to bring men nearer to God.

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[1] The sermons were first published at Cologne in 1615, from the notes of a man who had listened to them. This edition was full of blunders. When Bellarmine had examined it, he wrote to a friend in Cologne : 'The master-printer would seem to have neither any education nor any sense, and I am heartily ashamed of the publication. Really, printers deserve

A few years after his elevation to the cardinalate, Bellarmine wrote a short essay on preaching which sums up his ideal of the Christian orator, and incidentally gives the clue to his own practice. There are nine points in it, and they make together a golden little compendium of pulpit wisdom which the passage of time has in no way obscured.

> A true preacher [he says] should have a twofold aim before him, to instruct men in what they ought to know, and to urge them on in what they ought to do. He must conceive his aims clearly, and then direct his whole sermon and each individual part of it to the attainment of what he has set before his mind. Thus, for example, he should say to himself, to-day's Gospel is an exhortation to penance, and therefore I want with the help of God to instil the desire of that virtue into my people's hearts. For this purpose, I will collect various motives, proofs, illustrations, etc., which bear on the matter. In the same way, the true preacher must examine each part of his sermon and see whether it conduces to the end specified. It is because they neglect these preliminaries that many men discourse not only uselessly but even with peril to souls, their one idea being to get through an hour of talk.
>
> Secondly, in his instructions the true preacher will not be content merely to say something on each word of the Gospel, or to throw out some thoughts which its phrases have suggested to him. The literal and genuine sense of the text must be made clear, and its bearing on faith and morals emphasized. In a word, the preacher's business is to teach what the Holy Ghost intended to teach when He inspired the sacred writer's pen.
>
> Thirdly, in order to stir in men's hearts the love of holiness, it

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very ill of Christendom, and are guilty of grievous sin in exposing such books for sale. If Isaias sharply reproved those who sold wine mixed with water, how much more blameworthy are they who sell truth adulterated by error.' Fuligatti, *Roberti Bellarmini S.R.E. Cardinalis e Societate Jesu Epistolae familiares*, Romae, 1650, cxviii, p. 268. In 1617 the Premonstratensians of Cambrai brought out a much more satisfactory edition, based on Bellarmine's own manuscript. There are 796 double-column pages of small print in the book, the average length of each sermon being about nine pages. Forty-five sermons are on the Gospels of the Sundays and major Feasts ; five are *de Novissimis* ; five on the text *Missus est angelus*, etc. ; twelve on faith, the true Church and the evils of heresy ; eight on the sufferings and sorrows of life ; and twelve on the Psalm *Qui habitat in adjutorio Altissimi*. They were translated into French in 1856, and they form the basis of an excellent handbook for preachers entitled *Sermons from the Latins*, which was published by Dr. J. Bagster in 1902.

[1] Cf. nn. ii, iv, vi, viii, ix, x, xi, xii, xiii, xiv, xv, xvii, xviii, xxxvi.

is not enough to get angry with sinners and shout at them. Empty clamouring of that kind may, indeed, terrify simple folk, but its only effect on the educated is to make them laugh. In neither class will it produce any solid fruit. Therefore we must first of all appeal to the minds of those who listen to us, and endeavour by sound reasons deduced from Holy Writ, by arguments of common sense, by examples and by similes, so to convince them that they shall be forced to acknowledge the ideal of living which we propose as the only one becoming a reasonable man. Then by our eloquence and earnestness, and all the aids which rhetoric affords, we must endeavour to waken in their hearts a serious desire for that which their reason has already approved.

Three things are necessary for the attainment of the preacher's ends, three qualities of soul without which his efforts will be unavailing. They are a great, vehement zeal for the honour of God, wisdom, and eloquence. The fiery tongues which appeared above the Apostles when God made them the first preachers of His Evangel are the symbols of these things, the burning fire betokening zeal, the light, wisdom, and the form of a tongue, eloquence. Eloquence without charity and wisdom is only empty chattering. Wisdom and eloquence without charity are dead and profitless. And charity without wisdom and eloquence is like a brave man unarmed.[1]

To obtain the zeal or apostolic spirit which is the very foundation of Christian preaching nothing avails so much as assiduous prayer, constant and serious meditation, and the careful reading of spiritual books, especially such as contain the lives of the saints.

The wisdom required in the preacher after God's own heart is made up of three things, the first of which is knowledge of the Scriptures. Consequently, our 'ecclesiastes' ought to read a portion of the sacred text every day so as to make himself thoroughly familiar with it, at the same time diligently consulting the commentaries of the Fathers. The second part of the preacher's wisdom is dogmatic theology. It is not right to propound to the people the mere opinions of learned doctors, because, in sober truth, if they do but know and remember what they are bound to know, we may consider ourselves to have done very well by them. In the third place, pulpit wisdom demands varied erudition in its possessor. He must be provided with a great fund of illustrations, similes, and motives, and be able to support his arguments by the telling testimony of prophets and saints. In this respect, the following works will be found extremely helpful: St. John Chrysostom on the Epistles of St. Paul, and the same holy orator's sermons to the people of Antioch; the sermons of St. Basil; the treatise of St. Augustine on the Psalms, and his sermons on the words of Our Lord and the Apostles; the Dialogues of St. Gregory; and finally the histories of the Church and the lives of the saints, written with such fidelity by Athanasius, Jerome, the Venerable Bede, and others.[1]

2. These, then, were the secrets of Bellarmine's marvellous success in the pulpit—zeal, wisdom, and eloquence. First, we may consider the zeal which he puts as the foundation of all genuine Christian preaching. It burns in every line of his own sermons, and gives to them the intensely practical tone which is their most striking characteristic. They might well be described as 'Sermons on Subjects of the Day.' He was not one to waste his opportunities beating the air. It was a time of spiritual crisis when, owing to heresy and national disasters, the faith and hope of many men were growing dim. His apostolic heart bled for these poor people who were so apt to seek comfort for their sorrows in drink and debauchery. It did not take him long to discover that the source of their trouble was lack of confidence in God, and so in the pulpit he insisted tirelessly on the great motives of Christian hope. The problem of human suffering occupied him more than any other subject. He was always reverting to it, arguing and pleading for God, and justifying His ways to the suspicious intellect of man. During the Lent of 1574, his whole course was entitled *De Tribulatione*. 'As I made my humble prayer to God to-day, dear brethren,' he began, 'I begged Him, the Father of orphans, to inspire me with some thought for your consolation,' and then in eight long sermons, he proceeded to prove to them by a thousand arguments, how sweet for the Christian soul might be the uses of adversity. His aim was to give these men he loved right thoughts about God, and to instruct them in the strategy of His Providence, which sends 'sorrows out like soldiers to do battle with our vices.'[2]

> Men troubled with some great sorrow [he said], have neither the time nor the heart nor, often enough, the opportunity for sin. How was it that we did not witness the usual fury and madness of the Carnival this year at Louvain, Mechlin, Antwerp, and other great cities of Belgium? Why were there no drunken men in the streets, no masked marauders, no midnight revelry? Who was it that taught wisdom and sober sense to such multitudes in so short a time? *An non Domina Tribulatio*?—was it not my Lady Tribulation?

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[1] *De ratione formandae concionis:* Instructio scripta a Roberto Bellarmino, S.J. postea S.R.E. Cardinalis. Given in full in the *Opuscula* of the Ven. N. Lancicius. Antwerp, 1650, vol. v, pp. 312–313.

[2] *Concio* II, *de Tribulatione.*

His concern in all these sermons on suffering is to show that love is ultimately its meaning. My Lady Tribulation is love knocking at the door, trying to get in, an inexorable, patient love, that sees men always in the perspective of eternity, and has no aim but to purify, enlighten, and perfect them. 'In the heyday of youth or prosperity men easily forget God, but sorrow comes, wisest of counsellors, and teaches them that vanity is vanity. Then only do they learn that all is not gold that glitters, nor is everything of great worth which is bought and sold in the market-place of fools.' [1]

The following passage illustrates another of his arguments, and is a good example of the mingled wisdom and homeliness which characterized his sermons :

> You have doubtless seen blacksmiths pour a little water on the fire when they wished to heat the iron more rapidly. The water does not put the fire out, as we might expect, but by what the philosophers call *antiperistasis*,[2] makes it burn better than ever. The fire of charity with which you love God extends to many things besides Him, to wife, children, property, reputation, and so its flame is not very strong nor eager. What, then, does the All-wise Artificer do, who fashioned the heavens and the earth ? He pours the water of tribulation on the fire, taking away from you the things you love, but only that your charity may contract its forces and burn to Him, the Love of loves, more vehemently.[3]

Even God's sternest visitations are mercifully proportioned to man's strength and need :

> The just man's present sufferings cannot pass with him to the life beyond the grave, and in this life they are permitted to come to him only one at a time and for the briefest space. *Momentaneum et leve*, that is the extent of their commission. We never endure at once the pains of a year, or a month, or a day, or an hour. As in time nothing is present but a brief indivisible now, so the burden

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[1] *Concio* IV, *de Tribulatione.*

[2] 'It is very requisit that hee who exposeth himselfe to the hazard of Forreine Travell, should bee well grounded and settled in his religion . . . and somewhat versed in the Controversies 'twixt us and the Church of Rome. . . . Such a one may passe and repasse through the very midst of the Roman See . . . and yet returne home an untainted Protestant. . . . Nay the more he is encompassed with the superstitions of the contrary, the more he will be strengthened in his own Faith : like a good Well useth to be hotter in Winter than Summer, *per Antiperistasin*, that is, by the coldness of the circumambient ayre, which in a manner besiegeth it round, and so makes the intrinsique heat unite and concentre itself the more strongly to resist the invading Enemy.'—Howell's *Instructions for Forreine Travell*, London, 1642. Arber's Reprints, p. 17.

[3] *Concio* IV, *de Tribulatione.*

we bear can never in a true sense be more than momentary. We sip our chalice slowly and gradually, God putting the tiny drops of its sufferings to our lips one by one. But in the life to come, how different will the process be! There we shall drink the torrent of bliss at one great draught, and hold all the riches of eternity in a now without future or past.[1]

In these sermons Bellarmine's style might perhaps be bettered, but not the substance of his teaching. He said practically all that there is to be said about the meaning and purposes of sorrow, and with such flaming earnestness that it is plain he was breaking his heart because men were suspicious of God and consequently stingy in their devotion. He is at war from the first page to the last with everything that diminishes God's external glory or prejudices the interests dear to His love, and it was the intensity of his zeal which gave such power and point to his imagery when he said: 'if a man only understood the reverence due to God's holy Name he would choose gladly to have his two lips stitched together rather than utter it in vain.' The sins of his people and, above all, the sins of priests, weighed like a great burden on this perfect priest's heart.

> What will become of them [he asked], those sad traitors who sell Christ daily for less than Judas did, for a woman's kiss, or a dance, or a cup of wine? When celebrating the tremendous mystery of the Mass, a priest knows right well that he is in the Holy of Holies, surrounded by choirs of adoring angels who tremble with awe. Think, then, what a matter for tears it is, to see one so placed, cold and inattentive, and in such a hurry that it looks as if he thought there was a band of robbers on his track. We all proclaim to the world that Christ Himself is present in the Sacrament of the Altar, and still some of us act, when we have Him in our hands, as though there was nothing we believed less, or as if we held a God of metal or stone, who could neither hear, nor see, nor feel. . . . We place Him—the Lord of Glory, whose Name the angels hardly dare to breathe—on a corporal which we should blush to see spread on a servants' table, while His altars are defiled with dust and given over to spiders as a grand place where they can weave their webs undisturbed and hunt flies contentedly. . . . I could tolerate many other abuses, which I shall not mention, if only the corporals and purificators were kept clean, and I beg and implore all good priests, zealous for the honour of Our Lord, to admonish and punish unsparingly those contemners of His Divine Majesty.[2]

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[1] *Concio* XII, *super Ps.* XC.

[2] *Concio* V, *super Missus est*, etc., and *Concio* IX, *de Dom.* 4a *Adventus*.

True zeal is always brave, and there never was a more fearless preacher than Bellarmine. When reading his fierce pages one is surprised that he ever got back alive from turbulent and unruly Belgium, where men were murdered for smaller offences than speaking the unvarnished truth. Reckoning it a little thing to be judged by man's day, he left generalities and smooth phrases to orators who were in quest of popularity. *Expedit vobis* was his watchword, not what his audience liked, but what was good for them.

> Preachers who are anxious to do their duty [he said on one occasion] must not suffer themselves to be frightened away from wholesome teaching, merely because by delivering it they may make enemies among their flock. He is but a sad and sorry evangelist who seeks his own and not God's glory, and desires to be loved and praised by the people, instead of bending all his energies to make God loved and praised by them. Much better would it be for him to plough in the fields or beg his bread, than preach—*aratorem potius quam oratorem agere*. Suppose a devoted husband, who is on a journey, sends his wife some little gift or token by a messenger, and the fellow uses it to ingratiate himself with the lady, would we not rightly account him a scoundrel, and an adulterer at heart ? Tell me now, if Christ the Heavenly Spouse of Holy Church sends her a message through a preacher, and he, instead of delivering it faithfully, tries to appear a grand fellow on account of his commission, and uses the very Scriptures themselves to show off his eloquence and win the world's applause—tell me, I say, what better is he in the eyes of God than an adulterer ? [1]

3. The second quality which the true preacher must possess is wisdom, which has three facets, scripture, theology, and various secular learning. Father Bellarmine in his very first sermon quoted forty different passages of the Old and New

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[1] Concio xxxii, *de Dom 4a post Pascha*. Cf. *De Ascensione Mentis in Deum*, Antwerp, 1615, Gradus sextus, cap. iv: 'There are many preachers of the word of God in the Church to-day, and there have always been many. What is the reason that so few are converted by their sermons and declamations ? Why is practically no change observable in the morals of a city where twenty, thirty, or even forty orators preached daily during Lent ? . . . The only explanation I can find is that the sermons preached are for the most part learned, elegant, and flowery, but that the soul, the life, the fire is wanting, in brief charity is wanting—that great charity which alone can inspire the words of the speakers, and inflame and change the hearts of the listeners. In saying this, I do not mean that many preachers are without power of voice and vehemence of gesture. . . . What is to be desired is that they should be animated by a great love of God and a great zeal for the salvation of souls, and this, not as a pretended but as a genuine emotion ; not forced, but as it were welling up naturally from the depths of the heart.'

Testaments, each in full and always to the point. Every sermon he preached had the same scriptural seal on it, and contained, as a rule, half a hundred texts. It would be easy to reconstruct the Gospels entire out of them. And not only does he quote, and quote with sovereign facility, but his whole style is coloured and saturated with biblical allusions. He dropped into the language of Prophet and Evangelist as naturally as if it were his own, and moved about among the inspired writings like a master in his house. As one reads him, the conviction grows that he must have known the Bible from cover to cover by heart. Nothing else can explain the readiness and felicity of his innumerable quotations. The Bible was his library of libraries because, as he said, its books were of God and by God, a double privilege which no other source of wisdom could boast. 'Natural science and philosophy and law show us, indeed, how to earn our daily bread, protect our wills, and discover the secrets of the stars, but the Scriptures guard God's own Testament, and take us beyond sun and moon to the very feet of their Maker.' His first care when dealing with so sublime a subject was to make clear the literal sense of the various texts he adduced, the sense which the Holy Ghost, their Author, primarily intended. In doing this, he shows a very wonderful familiarity with the writings and commentaries of the Fathers. How a man so young and fully occupied as he was, could have become thus intimate with St. Augustine, St. John Chrysostom, St. Basil, and St. Jerome, is one of the mysteries of his astounding career.

Not less striking is his wide and accurate knowledge of theology. One of his finest and most fruitful sermons was on the dogma of the Real Presence, and some extracts from it will serve better than any description to give a true idea of his oratory:

> *Accipite et manducate : Hoc est corpus meum.* Weigh carefully, dear brethren, the force of these words. Surely laws and decrees ought to be promulgated in clear, precise, simple terms, and not obscurely or ambiguously. Otherwise, any man might plead ignorance and say 'Let the legislator speak plainly if he wants his law to be kept.' Now what Christian ever doubted that Our Lord in instituting this Sacrament gave orders and framed a law that it was to be renewed perpetually in His Church? 'Do this,' He said, 'in memory of Me.' Since, then, these words of Christ are the expression of a law or command, to read figures and metaphors into them is to make Almighty God the most imprudent and incom-

petent of legislators. Again, a man's last will and testament should surely be drawn up in the straightforward speech of everyday life. No one but a madman, or one who desired to make trouble after his death, would employ metonymy and metaphor in such a document. When a testator says, 'I leave my house to my son John,' does anybody or will anybody ever understand his words to mean 'I leave to my son John, not my house itself standing four-square, but a nice, painted picture of it.' In the next place, suppose a prince promised one of you a hundred gold pieces, and in fulfilment of his word sent a beautiful sketch of the coins, I wonder what you would think of his liberality. And suppose that when you complained, the donor said, 'Sir, your astonishment is out of place, as the painted crowns you received may very properly be considered true crowns by the figure of speech called metonymy,' would not everybody feel that he was making fun of you and your picture? Now Our Lord promised to give us His flesh for our food. The bread which I shall give, He said, is my flesh for the life of the world. If you argue that the bread may be looked upon as a figure of His flesh, you are arguing like the prince, and making a mockery of God's promises. A wonderful gift indeed that would be, in which Eternal Wisdom, Truth, Justice, and Goodness deceived us, its helpless pensioners, and turned our dearest hopes to derision.

This is the argument of common sense, but the preacher had one still stronger in reserve, founded on an appeal to the great cloud of witnesses which the Christian centuries had produced. He does not merely cite a string of passages from the Fathers, which is an easy feat, but puts them in their context, and shows their precise bearing on the doctrine of the Real Presence.

> So plain and manifest was the truth of this doctrine to both Catholics and heretics in the early ages [he says], that some of the best and ablest Fathers used it as a kind of foundation or first principle for the illustration of other dogmas, or the refutation of errors against the Faith. Thus, for instance, did that very ancient writer the blessed martyr Irenaeus, when he wished to prove against Valentinus that Christ was the Son of God and the Word of the Father Almighty who created heaven and earth. His argument ran as follows: If Christ is not the Author and source of all things, He certainly has not power to change the essence or nature of one thing into the essence or nature of another, and, conversely, if He has this power, He must be their Creator. But the Valentinians admit that Christ changed bread into His flesh, and how then can they deny that He was the Maker of the world? In the words of St. Irenaeus himself, 'How can these men logically confess, as they do, that the bread over which thanks

have been given, is the Body of their Lord, and the Chalice His Blood, if they refuse to acknowledge Christ to be the Son of the world's Creator, that is, the Word of Him by whose power the trees bear fruit, the fountains of water are unsealed, and the earth gives first the blade, then the ear, then the full-grown corn in the ear?' Let the Calvinists see the point of this argument, and then answer it if they can, for if the Eucharist be nothing else but bread, which the words of consecration leave unchanged, the proof of Christ's eternal sonship given by St. Irenaeus can have had no meaning for him or for his adversaries.

Bellarmine also discusses, in the same careful and scholarly way, passages from St. Cyril, St. Hilary, St. Epiphanius, St. Augustine, St. Ambrose, St. Optatus, and St. Basil. A capital point is made out of the veneration in which the sacred species were held by the faithful:

If the Eucharist be nothing but bread, why has it always been worshipped with such great reverence? Surely the water of Baptism, which is so intimately connected with the Holy Ghost, merits greater honour than a piece of bread, which is merely a figure of Our Lord's Body. Yet who ever heard of that water being preserved in golden vessels or invoked or adored? And when were catechumens ever forbidden to look at it, as they were forbidden to look at the Eucharist? . . . That I may show you, dear brethren, how just and righteous is the position we hold, let us suppose that the last day has come and that our doctrine of the Eucharist turns out to be false and absurd. If Our Lord now asks us reproachfully: 'Why did ye believe thus of My Sacrament? Why did ye adore the Host?' may we not safely answer Him: 'Yea, Lord, if we were wrong in this, it was You who deceived us. We heard Your word, *This is My Body*, and was it a crime for us to believe You? We were confirmed in our mistake by a multitude of signs and wonders which could have had You only for their Author. Your Church with one voice cried to us that we were right, and in believing as we did we but followed in the footsteps of all Your saints and holy ones. . . .'

The peroration of the sermon is an eloquent plea for frequent Communion, as practical considerations were never very distant from the thoughts of Father Bellarmine's apostolic heart:

We must not suffer it to be said, dear brethren, that this most holy and saving Sacrament was instituted for us in vain. The wheaten bread which is the food of our bodies was not grown in the fields, reaped, ground, and baked merely to be looked at, but to be eaten and sustain our life and strength. So too, the Bread of Angels was not given to us solely for our veneration, but for our nourishment as well, that by partaking of it often we may refresh and fortify our souls. There are many men in this great city of Louvain who speak of this holy Sacrament in the most beautiful and reverent terms. They even compete with one another to see who can do It most honour. But believe me, those honour It best who take care to receive It often with pure and upright hearts. Why, I ask you, has charity grown so cold amongst us ? Why do our lives and manners so little resemble those of the first Christians that alongside them we seem to be only painted disciples, or Christians on the mantelpiece, who never stir a foot or lift a hand ? Is it not that, in the Psalmist's words, we have forgotten to eat our bread ? They, on the contrary, learned from the Apostles to take this most profitable and life-giving food every day, and so they became strong, robust, energetic soldiers of Christ, ready and in trim for every labour, and for the last heroic conflict of martyrdom. Let us then try to be like them here on earth, that we may deserve to be their comrades in Heaven. Through Jesus Christ Our Lord, Amen.[1]

4. The third quality necessary in the Christian preacher is eloquence. Eloquence, says Bellarmine, is like a weapon in the hands of Christ's soldiers, the instrument by which their zeal and wisdom are turned to practical account. But it is the least of the three things needful, and the mere beating of an empty drum if unaccompanied by wisdom and charity:

If I should speak with the tongues of men and of angels and have not charity, I am but as the sounding brass and the tinkling cymbal.' The Apostle does not say if I should speak Hebrew, or Greek, or Latin, but if I should speak all the languages in the world, and, in addition, have the eloquence of the angels themselves so that I could sway men this way and that exactly as it pleased me, yet if I lack the love of God, I am only a tin-can or a bell, empty and senseless. A bell is the deafest of things and at the same time the most deafening. It calls to sermons, to lectures, to arms, but it does not itself hear the summons, nor understand it. Preachers who have eloquence without charity are like that. They have a message for other men, but none for themselves. They shout away in the pulpit like a bell in its tower, but they do not hear nor heed their own fiery exhortations. As Aeschines said of Demosthenes, they are only tin-whistles which have nothing inside them except a sound. When cannon primed with blank shot are fired at a city, they make a terrific noise, but the walls and battlements remain standing. And so, too, men who preach without fervour and charity may indeed deafen the ears of their audience with a great clamour of words, but they will never overthrow the devil's fortifications in their hearts. And, similarly, wisdom without charity is profitless. 'If I should have all knowledge,' says St. Paul, 'and have not charity, I am nothing.' Who is there in this illustrious home of learning who does not think daily as he goes to the schools of law, medicine, philosophy, or theology, how best he may progress in his particular subject, and win at last his doctor's cap? The school of Christ, dear brethren, is the school of charity. On the last day, when the great general examination takes place, there will be no questions at all on the text of Aristotle, the aphorisms of Hippocrates, or the paragraphs of Justinian. Charity will fill the whole syllabus.[1]

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[1] *Concio* XXXVII, *de Dom.* 11*a post Pentacosten, infra Octavam Corporis Xti.*

But, presupposing more fundamental things, Father Robert was a devout believer in the arts by which the preacher drives his lessons home, and has wise counsels for all who would acquire them.

For Christian eloquence, and indeed for all true eloquence [he says], it is necessary that art should correct and polish nature, but without spoiling or destroying it. And this is precisely where most people fail. In the first place, art should correct nature, or rather give nature its opportunity, because some men, whether through wrong education or by bad habit, speak and bear themselves faultily. Thus they use improper or uncouth words, move the head about ungracefully, and saw the air all the time with the left hand. With a little attention, these and similar mistakes may easily be noticed and avoided. But I say again, art must not destroy nature. If there are faults which cannot be got rid of except by assuming stilted postures, it is better to leave them alone. Nature uncorrected is a lesser evil than nature spoilt. A man who preaches in a tone so different from his ordinary way of speaking that he seems rather to be singing or reading a book, destroys by his affectation what is most attractive in the human voice, namely its native and spontaneous accent. Again, if he uses words that are too big, obsolete or poetical, or sentences so studied that they smell unmistakably of the lamp, his sermon will have little effect, except to advertise the worldliness and vanity of his mind.

Whoever wishes to avoid these pitfalls must tell himself seriously that though he is in the pulpit before a numerous audience, his real business is to speak to individual men. When one person talks to another and tries to persuade him, he does not begin straight off with a host of neat phrases, and quotations from the poets. Nor does he fling his arms and body about in violent gesticulation, at the start. No, he opens the conversation in a plain and homely way, with his body still and his voice on its usual everyday note. If, later on, he is forced into argument or obliged to exhort, or counsel, we see him become roused little by little. His voice gets louder, his head and arms move, and the stream of words swells into a great torrent, all telling us that real feeling is at the back of the change, and not affectation or the tricks of art. The only difference there should be between a preacher's sermon to a multitude and one man's familiar talk to another, is that, in the first case, greater loudness and slower utterance are necessary, as otherwise the words will not carry to all for whom they are intended. To this we may add that speech in the pulpit should be more dignified and carefully chosen than that which serves our purposes in the converse of daily life, because as the proverb says, *multitudo honorabilis*, respect is due to numbers.

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[1] *Concio* XIX, *de Dom. Quinquagesimae*

Bellarmine next describes the three kinds of sermons employed by the Fathers, the orderly exposition of Scripture in which exhortation is but brief and intermittent, the homily, in which much exhortation is added to the exposition, and finally the sermon proper, as the modern world understands it, in which exegesis is not so prominent. These three types of discourse are all admirable, and each should receive due consideration from the preacher who is anxious to serve the best interests of his flock. But there was another type of more recent invention for which he had no use at all. 'Its devotees,' he says, 'smother the simple scenes of the Gospel under a vast heap of rhetorical bouquets, or they launch out against the crimes of the Pharisees, in a style full of verbal tricks and contortions; at the cost of much sweat to themselves, indeed, but with no possible advantage to any one.' [1]

5. Bellarmine's sermons besides being zealous and wise, have about them the unstudied but attractive eloquence which the words of a man in deadly earnest always possess. But the high seriousness of his tone did not make him dull or heavy. He knew his poets and philosophers as well as any humanist, and being a keen observer of all that went on in workshop, street, or fields, he had a great fund of similes and analogies with which to make windows in his arguments:

> You have doubtless seen, dear brethren, how little boys fish for frogs in some stagnant pool. They tie to a string a bit of skin taken from a frog already captured, and then throw it out as a bait for other frogs. Up rushes the best swimmer in the pool and seizes the skin with all its might, though quite incapable of either

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[1] *De ratione formandae concionis.*

gnawing or swallowing it. On this, the fisherman immediately jerks in his line with the frog attached, drags the bait violently out of its mouth, and tosses it back to the other expectant victims. And so he continues until he has enough dead frogs by him to satisfy his immediate needs. Is not this an accurate picture of human gullibility? Men are so like frogs. They grab at things which they cannot use or keep, and that wily angler the devil knows how to capture multitudes of them with some single and sorry piece of bait such as a few acres of land, or the wooden chair which we call a throne. Kings come and kings go, but the throne remains, having damned perhaps the majority of its occupants.

St. Francis or the Curé d'Ars would have liked that illustration, and the sermons are full of similar homely touches which helped them to 'enter in at lowly doors.' The constantly recurring similes, metaphors, and stories are nearly always vivid and arresting, with a point in them somewhere, calculated to stir even the most languid imaginations. A plain man might not be much affected by philosophical disquisitions on the shortness and uncertainty of human life. But that was not Father Bellarmine's way. Once upon a time, he says, a poor fellow stumbled over the edge of a dizzy cliff. By a lucky chance, he managed in his fall to grasp hold of a little bush which grew from the side of the rock, but hope died in his heart when he peered into the crevice to examine the roots of his frail support. For what was it he saw? Two mice, a black one and a white, gnawing ceaselessly at the roots, and already half way through them. And such is human life, pitched perilously between two eternities. Day and Night, like the mice of the fable, eat into it with never a pause. Soon they will be through, and what will happen then?[1]

The sermons are full of life and movement and bustle. Like bees in a hive, the ideas with which they teem are incessantly active *et munire favos et daedala fingere tecta.* The theme or main plan, which their author said every true preacher must have clearly before his mind, is never lost sight of, but he does not permit it to become dull or wearisome through reiteration. We meet it again and again, but always in a different shape, like the motif of a finely orchestrated piece of music, in a solitary phrase, in a question, in a parable, in a passage hot with passionate denunciation or pleading. A single word of his text often gives him scope for a sermon within a sermon: 'Walking by the sea of Galilee, Jesus saw two brothers. *Ambulans Jesus*. How rarely do we read that He sat down, dear brethren. He was nearly always on foot, hinting to us that life is a journey, and that we are only on the way to home.'[1] And again:

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[1] *Concio* IV, *de Dom.* 1*a Adventus.*

> *Vox clamantis*, the voice of one crying. John the Baptist is all a voice. Other prophets wrote down their prophecies. He is a prophet in flesh and blood. His life is his sermon. Would to God, dear brethren, that we had more preachers such as he, men who by the eloquence of their deeds might convert the wicked, and set tepid souls on fire. Alas, it is not only good deeds that are eloquent. The voice of thy brother's blood cried to Me from the earth, said God to Cain. Oh, if Christian men only knew how our crimes and infamies shout in the ears of those outside the Church and prevent their conversion, they would not so easily lend themselves to be the devil's orators.

To illustrate the exuberance of his style, we may quote here a passage from a sermon which he preached for the first time when studying at Padua. It is on the opening words of Psalm xc, *Qui habitat in adjutorio Altissimi*, and combines the verve and freshness of twenty-five, which was his age at the time, with the depth and penetration characteristic of long personal experience:

> Let us, dear brethren, take each word of the Psalm, singly, and think it out. In the first place, we notice that the Prophet names no particular class of men, in order to show that God's promises are for everybody. So he does not say, 'A rich man that dwelleth in the aid of the Most High,' lest the poor should seem to be excluded, nor 'A poor man that dwelleth,' lest the rich should seem to be left out. But he says in general terms *Qui*, which stands for all the world. No class, nor age, nor sex, nor rank, nor state, but finds a place in that universal relative. God is not an accepter of persons. He is everybody's Friend, providing for and defending each and all who fly to Him in their troubles. He that dwelleth in the aid of the Most High, whoever he be, rich or poor, great or small, noble or rustic, prince or commoner, he shall infallibly abide under the protection of the God of Heaven.
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> The next word *habitat*, dwelleth, means a great deal. It is a little word, but full of power and energy. Notice that what is said is not 'he who trusts' or 'he who confides,' but 'he who dwells.' This is to bring home to us that we are not to fly to the Divine protection as men do to a tree or a doorway when it

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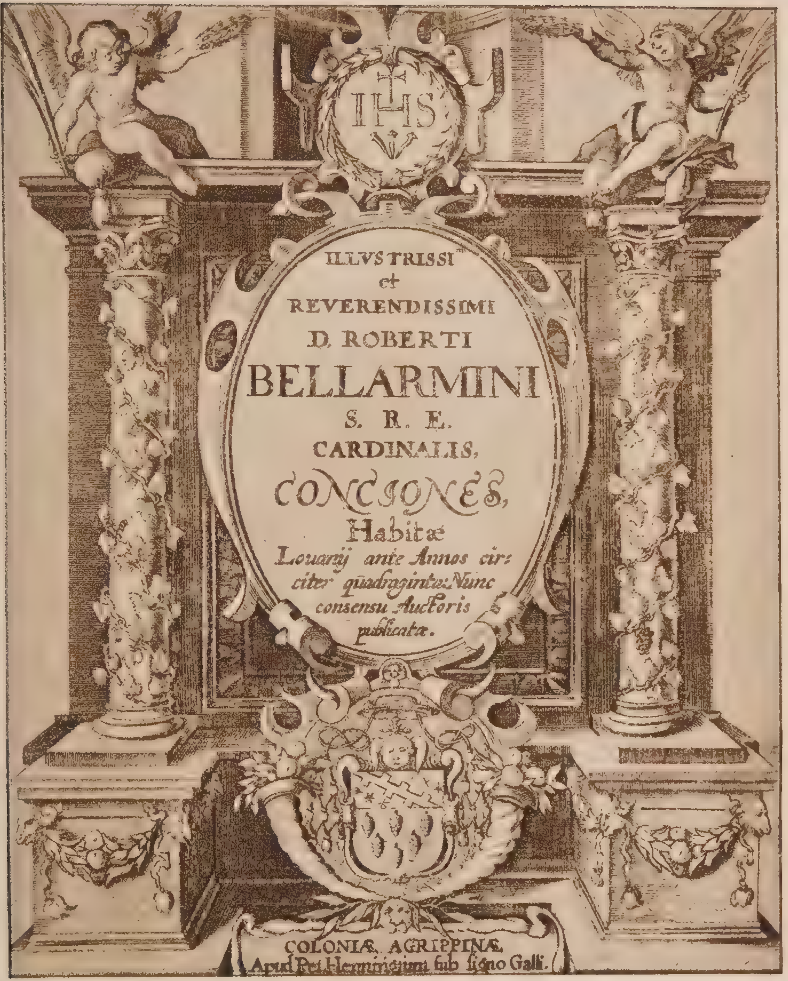
[1] This conception of life as a pilgrimage was one of Bellarmine's favourite spiritual analogies.



ILLVSTRISSI^{mi}
et
REVERENDISSIMI
D. ROBERTI

BELLARMINI

S. R. E.
CARDINALIS,

CONCIONES,

Habitæ
Louanij ante Annos circiter
quadraginta: Nunc
consensu Auctoris
publicatæ.

COLONIÆ AGRIPPINÆ
Apud Pet. Henningium ſub ſigno Galli.

rains, but rather as little boys are wont to rush to their fathers' arms when anything frightens them. We see them playing with their companions in the streets, but no sooner does the least thing go wrong, than they are off home as fast as their small legs will carry them. It never occurs to them to doubt the security of home. They know that they have mother and father there who would gladly give their hearts' blood to protect them. But people who seek refuge from rain under a tree, have a good look round first, and it is only when no better shelter offers that they run willy-nilly to the tree. Why is it that some men implore the Divine assistance without receiving it, and seem to put their trust in God without being protected by Him? The reason is that they do not really *dwell* in the aid of the Most High, nor take shelter under the Providence of God as in their Father's house. They rather make sporadic dashes to it in time of trouble, as they do to a tree when there is a sudden shower. It is therefore very necessary for us, dear brethren, to get into the way of always and instinctively turning to God. We must try by constant exercise of holy confidence to build for ourselves a house where we may abide safely when the dark hours come. And we must carry our trusty house about with us wherever we go, just as we see the snails do. They wander here and there and everywhere, and yet they are always at home. . . .[1]

6. A final characteristic of the sermons, which we may note, was the breezy humour that pervaded them. Like the martyred Chancellor of England, whose memory he cherished, Father Robert was convinced that 'a man may live for the next world and be merry withal.' Wit has its fashions, we know, and the fun of one generation may fail to raise a smile in the next, but whether or not the sayings that made laughter long ago awaken in us a corresponding mood, they do at least suggest that their author was a man in whose company we should have felt at ease. Bellarmine did not try to be humorous. He could not help it. With all his deep seriousness of mind, he seems to have been constitutionally incapable of resisting the appeal of a comic situation, as when, for instance, he described how some good people in Louvain kept the Lenten fast. 'I understand,' he says, 'that their evening collation differs from the big meal of the day only in the smaller dimensions of the tablecloth.'[2]

Preaching on the text, *It is now the hour to rouse ourselves from sleep*, he begins in the following lively style:

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[1] *Concio* II, *super Psalm* xc.

[2] *Conciones*, p. 624.

> When we want to get somebody out of bed, we first shout in his ear, 'up with you, lazybones, the sun is already climbing the sky.' Should our sleeper, however, be one of the many who take little interest in the sun's doings, and care not if it never rose again provided they be let snore on contentedly till noon, should our dealings be with such a one, we try another and more effective argument. 'Get up,' we say. 'Great and weighty business is afoot downstairs. In fact, breakfast is ready.' So, too, St. Paul first exhorts his Romans to rouse themselves because the night is past and the day is at hand, but, wise man, he offers another motive also, provided by the great banquet which Our Lord is preparing for us in Heaven. 'Now is our salvation nearer than when we believed.' [1]

Sometimes his humour had a decided sting in it, especially when the Carnival and its abuses occupied him. The Carnival was his pet abomination, and he felt that the roisterers who disgraced Louvain deserved but little mercy from anyone who had the interests of religion at heart. Once, after preaching a beautiful Lenten sermon on the folly of the Cross, he found that the time allotted for it was not up.

> I think you do not want to go away yet [he said, addressing his flock]. There is still half an hour, so how shall we occupy it? If I am not mistaken, I believe you would like to hear something about the great feast called Carnival which is now in full swing. First, I am sorry to say there is no mention of this feast in the Breviary, though it is kept everywhere most religiously. Ay, and it is the most celebrated and solemn of feasts, a double of the first class which may not be transferred on any account. I would not willingly mix up serious and silly things, especially in this place, but often enough there is wisdom in a laugh, and besides, just once in the year we may be permitted to unbend a little. So now I will tell you all about this great feast called Carnival.

His description is a good piece of satire of its kind, though not particularly delicate.

> Wonderful people [he says], are these revellers. They do not seem to require any sleep like ordinary mortals. Dancing does instead. All night long they run about the city, shouting and merry-making, and though their poor heads are exposed to rain and wind they never seem to suffer any injury. But just suggest to one of them a solitary hour of prayer, or ask him to go after dark on some errand of charity, and see what happens. The hardy head that stood the rigours of midnight so bravely at once begins

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[1] *Concio* II, *de Dom.* 1*a Adventus.*

to ache, and next day the poor fellow is not able to get up till noon. Again, all the medicine books tell us that frugality in diet is most beneficial to health, and big dinners the reverse, yet our carnival friend never fasts because he says he would surely get a pain in his head if he did. He does not seem to mind the pains that come of eating too much. Other people look on drunkenness as a serious and despicable sin, but in his eyes the real sin is to mix water with the wine, nay, not only a sin but a sacrilege thus to tamper with the strength of a creature of God. Water is the foe. He is more afraid of it than other men are of a conflagration. However, let us give him his due. He is thrifty, and does not waste good oil by turning out too early in the morning. And what is his programme when at last he leaves the blankets ? Quite innocent ; he just takes a stroll and plays a game for a while, in order to get in form for the strenuous battle with roasted partridges and chickens later in the day. When that great and sacred hour of dinner comes, he always has a few congenial spirits to keep him company. And their table-talk ? Well, we should not call it monastic except in the sense that it is mostly about monks and sacred ministers. That way lies much carnival mirth, and if any priest or bishop wishes to go to Confession but cannot remember his sins, I recommend him strongly to find some means of joining the feast unobserved, and there he will hear them all recounted with the greatest accuracy.

But I must now leave Bacchus and his boon-companions in their cups. We have had enough of them. Only one thing will I add, and it is this. Should I ever meet that gentleman, I would tell him he was making a great mistake. He is after pleasure, but he will not find it in excessive drinking. Too much light dulls the power and keenness of vision, and too much drink injures the sense of taste in a similar way. Pleasure, like all good things, is only to be found in a mean. Those who drink rarely and in moderation, really relish their wine and find it as welcome as a friend whose face they have not seen for a long time. But since I cannot deliver my counsel to Bacchus, king of tipplers, at his court, I shall leave him alone and speak my mind to you instead, dear brethren. What I have to say is very serious, and I will lead up to it with a funny story which happened to myself.

Before coming to Belgium, I was informed that it was a most fertile and prosperous country, so when I first arrived, I looked about expecting to find thriving vineyards on every side. But not one could I see ; and then somebody told me, to my surprise, that the Belgian wines were imported and not a home-product. Hearing this, I asked whether the people of the country were remarkable for their intelligence. So much so, answered my friend, that you will travel far before finding their equals. That is just what one might expect, said I. Wine is a great enemy of clear heads, and here, where it is not drunk, they naturally abound. What ? gasped my friend. Wine not drunk in Belgium? Why, there is hardly a man here who does not go on the spree regularly. Yes, I know, I said, you mean the country yokels who have not the sense to keep sober. I do not, sir, and I am amazed at your innocence, he answered; I mean rustics and townsfolk, plebeians and nobles, philosophers and theologians, and, in fact, the whole population with a few exceptions. They all take more than is good for them. On this, I could not help admiring the singular Providence of God which left Belgium vineyardless. If the people get drunk when wine is so dear and difficult to obtain, what would they do if each man had his own domestic vats?

O brethren, drunkenness is a disgusting vice in anybody, and a thing which a free man should surely despise. But in the people of Louvain it is most disgusting of all. I could not credit my ears when I heard that it was rampant in so learned and devout a city. Take away this stain, and what capital in the world is a match for yours? Believe me, gentlemen, I have seen many universities, academies, and homes of the muses, but hardly one of them is comparable with this shrine and citadel of wisdom, either as to the number of its students, the fame of its doctors, or the wealth and convenience of its instruments of learning. And yet, alas, the vilest of vices casts a dense cloud over its splendour, and so dims its glory and renown that they seem already on their way to extinction.[1]

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[1] *Concio* xx, *de Dom. Quinquagesimae.*

CHAPTER VI

THE BURDEN OF THE DAY

1. The Course of Controversies, which Father Bellarmine gave in Rome from 1576 onwards, earned him a European reputation and put him at once in the front rank of the Church's defenders. Like Rome itself that great work was not built in a day. Its origins go back to the Louvain years and beyond them, for during all the time of his teaching and preaching he was studying too, and studying with a very definite aim before him. He had no hint that he would be called upon to combat heresy directly, but nevertheless he prepared himself to hit the evil very hard if ever God should give him an opportunity. With this end in view, he spent his scanty leisure hours gathering and hewing the stones for his fortress of the faith, but so quietly and unobtrusively did he work 'that there was neither hammer nor axe nor any tool of iron heard in the house when it was in building.' To read some of his biographies, one would think the Controversies sprang up like a mushroom in a night, or that it was a kind of Melchisedech among books, without traceable ancestry. The Autobiography, too, gives the same impression, jumping as it does so many significant spaces in the tale. History, however, is not a sun-dial numbering only the march of big and splendid events. It wants to know how they grew and what relation they bear to the rest of a man's life, and to the secular context of which his life is a part. To find out that, the veiled hours have to be explored, and consequently, in this chapter, we shall study as well as we can how Robert Bellarmine wrestled in secret with the angel of learning.

The great theological syntheses of the Middle Ages have often been compared to the medieval cathedrals. They have the same largeness of conception, the same wealth of detail, the same majestic sweep of pillar, arch, and ornament, to a focus in God. But unfortunately there are other and less pleasant parallels between theology and architecture. Just as the splendid harmonies of Gothic degenerated into a trivial concern with ornament for ornament's sake, so did scholasticism, with its victorious unity in variety, decline into a system of idle quibbling. Many causes were at work to bring about its fall—the over-multiplication of universities, the rivalry among Religious Orders, the weariness which follows periods of intense activity, whether of mind or body. However it happened, the grand genial theses of St. Thomas were abandoned for mere dialectical fireworks. Argumentation instead of reasoning became the fashion, and a man was a Thomist or a Scotist, no longer from conviction, but because he was a Dominican or a Franciscan, studying at Paris or studying at Oxford. Theology turned into a kind of party politics, in which the main thing sought was, not the truth, but a victory over rival doctors. Nominalism, that queer ancestor of modern agnosticism, captured the schools and wrought havoc among students. Wiclif and Huss were both nominalists, while Luther's unbalanced and semi-sceptical theology is largely to be explained by the decadent scholasticism which he was taught in his youth.

In the early sixteenth century, two great men, Capreolus and Cajetan, both of them Dominicans, strove, but strove in vain, to deliver theology from this evil entail. The decadence had gone too far, and it was not until the very eve of the religious revolt that a well-planned and serious campaign of reform was set on foot. That glory, too, belongs to the sons of St. Dominic. Francis de Vittoria founded a school at Salamanca which revived the medieval tradition, and gave back her lost dignity to the queen of the sciences. Two of his greatest disciples, Melchior Cano and the Jesuit Maldonatus, have left sadly eloquent testimony of the evils which they were endeavouring to reform, evils which Robert Bellarmine, also, had to contend with in his studies at Louvain. Melchior Cano's outburst is sufficiently scathing.

> Would to God [he exclaimed] it had not been given me to experience, in this sixteenth century, the sophistry and stupid subtlety with which theology is debased by so many doctors in our universities. It was the devil's doing, and a thing I cannot speak of without tears. When Catholic theologians should have been armed cap-à-pie to meet the invasion of heresies from Germany, they had nothing but silly bits of stick for weapons. And so they were laughed at, and deservedly laughed at . . . because it was not theology that they ran after, but the smoke of theology.[1]

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[1] *De Locis Theologicis*, l. IX, c. I: *Opera*, Padua, 1714, pp. 243–244.

In France, the great herald and champion of scholastic reform was John Maldonatus, a personal friend and fellow-student of Robert Bellarmine. He began his first lecture at the College of Clermont with an account of the prevalent abuses very similar to that given by Melchior Cano:

> Most theologians have for a long time neglected Scripture, the Fathers, and the pure tradition of scholasticism. They concentrated their thoughts on Aristotle, and employed their hours and powers inventing and solving an infinity of complicated questions, in which the subtlety of their wits had scope to shine. This mania for hair-splitting got such a hold of them that the schools resounded with endless disputes, puerile cries, and hot arguments which, in time of serious war with the foe, proved rather a hindrance than a help to the triumph of the truth. If we should see a man who had been challenged to a duel with swords practising meantime most assiduously with a bow and arrow, what could we do but laugh at him? Now that is precisely what they do who confine their teaching to useless and superfluous questions which have no relation to the Holy Scriptures or the needs of the age. When I see them thus squander such precious opportunities, I feel constrained to cry out to them: 'What is it you are about, O slack and neglectful soldiers? The enemy is at your gates while you waste your time playing like children. Let your theology come forth from the cloud in which it has been wrapped until to-day. Scour off the rust which has grown on it through inaction, and let it abandon once and for all the pleasant, shady twilight of philosophy, and descend boldly into the arena. . . .'
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> But does this mean, you may ask me, that we are to abandon scholastic disputation altogether? No, gentlemen; the true way, I think, is to be found in the union of Scripture with the methods of scholasticism, so that when any question arises we shall not run to Plato or Aristotle for its solution, but to the Prophets, the Apostles, Our Lord Himself and His Church, and Christian antiquity. Furthermore, in all our work we shall consult the needs of our time.[1]

Bellarmine's views on theology were exactly those of his friend Maldonatus. He hated idle speculation, and was all for up-to-date, practical methods which went to war with real foes instead of inventing imaginary ones. Once, when a Cardinal, he was invited to a solemn discussion which had for its subject 'Whether it be possible to see the Divine Essence apart from the Divine Persons.' He listened patiently to all the finely spun arguments, but as he came away he gave a great sigh, saying: 'Would it not be better to wait for the solution of such conundrums until we get to Heaven, and spend the little time God allows us on earth in the study of positive and moral theology, and the holy Fathers?'

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[1] *Maldonati Oratio cum suam Theologiam aggrederetur.* Given in J. M. Prat's *Maldonat et l'Université de Paris au XVI siècle*, Paris, 1856, App. XI, pp. 555 sqq.

We know from his own confession that he was a man of action rather than of speculation, a lover of the concrete and practical, who looked upon learning as just one among many ways of serving God. The Society of Jesus, which held his devoted allegiance, encouraged this natural bent. It, too, was built for action, a regiment on a war-footing with definite foes in view and definite weapons. During his time at the Roman College, practically all his professors were from Spain, and had been deeply influenced by the great scholastic revival in that country. Robert, in his turn, was deeply influenced by them, and theology became for him what God meant it to be, a tool or a sword in the hand, and not a plaything. Already when at Padua, his mind was turning to the great doctrinal controversies of the day, and in his sermons he made frequent references to them. Then Providence sent him to Louvain, where he was in immediate touch with heresy of the most live and aggressive kind. He had gone there with no definite purpose beyond that of preaching and studying in the ordinary way, but it was inevitable that his environment should react upon one so sensitive intellectually, and turn his interests into new channels. He saw the battle for souls in progress all around him, and being the man he was he could not help wanting to join in the fray. From this time on, the thought of the many fair lands, and of England particularly, which heresy was making desolate, began to trouble his meditations. His sermons are full of it. Sixty-eight different times he broke the thread of his discourse to warn his hearers against the dangers of false teaching. There in Louvain itself, a little group of English exiles, headed by the valiant Dr. Nicholas Sanders, were a standing inspiration to his zeal. Year after year, from 1565–72, they produced their telling and vigorously-worded answers to the challenges that came to them from the homeland over the seas. He read these books carefully, and became convinced that their militant theology was exactly what that age of conflict required.

2. The great religious debate had entered on a new phase with the publication of the first volume of *The Centuries of Magdeburg* in 1559. Luther's most ardent and energetic

disciple, Mathias Francowitz, alias Flaccius Illyricus, conceived the design of undermining the Roman claims by an elaborate appeal to history. He gathered men and money for the purpose, and launched his assault with all the airs of an unbiased scholar. The aim of the 'Centuriators,' as they were called, was to prove that the Lutheran and not the Roman Church was the Church of the Apostles. Each century in turn was scoured for evidence to support that thesis, and volume after volume appeared until, in 1574, when Father Bellarmine was in the midst of his labours at Louvain, the work was brought to a triumphant conclusion. Written *sub specie eruditionis*, with a great flourish of documents, dates, and testimonies, the thirteen big folios were welcomed enthusiastically by Protestant Europe as the most deadly blow that had ever been dealt Catholicism. Among Catholics themselves there was a good deal of consternation. There were new features in this method of attack for which they were quite unprepared. Church history and patristic lore were certainly not the strong points of their scholarship, and it seemed doubtful whether a man could be found, learned enough to write an effective reply. Meantime, the 'Centuries' were doing immense harm. Stanislaus Hosius, the famous Papal legate, considered that no more pernicious work had ever been written. In May 1567, St. Francis Borgia wrote to St. Peter Canisius telling him that the Pope wished the Fathers of his Order to undertake the refutation of the Centuriators. But St. Peter, though he did eventually write three volumes in reply, considered that he and his brethren in Germany were not the men for such a task. He said that, personally, he hated learned research, and made the further confession that 'hardly a single Father of the German Province had even a moderate acquaintance with church history.'[1] Baronius, the great man who under St. Philip's inspiration was destined to pen, if not a perfect, at least a sufficiently good answer, admitted similarly, in the preface to his *Annals*, that 'nothing had hitherto been so neglected in the Church as genuine, sure, and exact study of ecclesiastical history, and its adequate narration in books.'

This incident of the *Centuries of Magdeburg* emphasized in an unpleasant way the need for more positive methods in theological study and teaching. For Robert Bellarmine the need was a challenge. Daily the conviction deepened in his mind that theology, if it was to be effective, must come down from the clouds and go out girded like a crusader to do battle with God's enemies. Not by syllogisms only was the Lord going to save His people. Catholic scholars must take a leaf from their enemies' book, and make more of history and criticism, for only thus could the Protestant appeal to the past be turned into a victorious argument for the Church of the ages.

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[1] Braunsberger, *Beati Petri Canisii Epistulae*, vol. v, pp. 480–481.

With these thoughts as a spur to his zeal, the young Jesuit professor put himself to school with the Prophets and Evangelists, the great Church Fathers, the Popes and Councils, and the theologians who had systematized Catholic tradition. The Scriptures were his first field, and there is plenty of evidence to show in what a thorough, scholarly spirit he worked it. For the proper understanding of the Bible, Hebrew was necessary, so Hebrew he decided to learn. He had not many spare hours in his busy day, but the love of God stretches out wonderfully the narrowest of time's dimensions. Learning Hebrew, or, indeed, learning anything in the sixteenth century, was not the straightforward task it is now, when our shelves are loaded with grammars, lexicons, and well-edited texts. Father Robert had to teach himself everything, digging his information laboriously out of the crabbed, disorderly books of the Rabbis, or the hardly more methodical efforts at a grammar which bore the names of Pico della Mirandola and Reuchlin. The best testimony to the success of his endeavours is given by a small manuscript volume which is in the archives of the Society of Jesus. It runs to a hundred and fourteen pages, each containing from eighteen to twenty-five lines, and is partly a kind of Hebrew exercise-book, and partly a commentary on Genesis. Father Robert wrote it, apparently, for the sake of some students to whom he was teaching the language. One of these men recalled, fifty years later, the 'extraordinary enthusiasm' for Hebrew which their young master's encouragement and example had inspired—*permirum discendi ardorem.*[1] This work was purely voluntary, and no part of his set programme, but learning for him was like love, self-communicative.

The text-book proves in a striking way how wide and wonderful his reading was at this early date. The authority of the Fathers is constantly invoked, and medieval and more recent commentators are laid under contribution with almost equal frequency. Even the Jewish Rabbis have a place in the argument, men such as Ben Ezra, Levi, David, Solomon, etc., and from the nature of the excerpts they seem to have been consulted at first hand. To complete the evidence for the catholicity of our author's tastes, we find him adducing also apt testimonies from Virgil, Tacitus, Pliny, Strabo, Josephus, and other pagan worthies. The first pages of his manuscript deal with the technicalities of the Hebrew text. There, as in so many other places, he shows a sturdy independence of judgment which does him much credit because founded on his own conscientious investigations. Thus he rejects the two commonest opinions as to the construction of *b'resith*, the first word of the Bible, and puts forward a new explanation. A little later he qualifies St. Jerome's construing of a word as 'non valde probabilis,' which is a decidedly bold comment to come from a mere beginner. The extraordinary kind of beginner he was, though, is shown by the long archaeological excursus into which he wanders on the meaning of the word *bega* in Genesis xxiv. 22. Cajetan admitted that he could not make out what it meant. The Vulgate translated it as a measure equal to two Jewish shekels, while the Chaldaic version put it down as one shekel, and the Septuagint as half a shekel. The question, then, was how to reconcile all these opinions. Father Robert, by dint of much browsing among old rabbinical arithmetic books and biblical commentaries, succeeded in harmonizing the various renderings. It is a very small point, but it illustrates well the detailed and painstaking style of his studies. If a man goes to such trouble over a shekel, we may be sure his scholarly thoroughness will not fail when bigger questions are at stake.[1]

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[1] Le Bachelet, *Bellarmin avant son Cardinalat*, p. 68.

He was not content with writing this book for the guidance of his scholars. The Hebrew grammars of the time were terrible mazes for a beginner's feet, so he determined to draw up a new one, easier to understand than the Rabbi's lucubrations. This work was published some years later, and became immensely popular. The edition of 1619 ran to 334 pages, and all one can say about it is that nothing less than heroism must have gone to its making. Father Robert took infinite pains to make his Hebrew 'Hebrew without tears'. In order to prove to his class that the grammar was easy, he guaranteed that he would teach a willing student enough of it in one week to enable him to read the Scriptures in the original with the sole aid of a dictionary. Someone accepted the bargain, and before the week was up, found that his professor's promise was not in the least an idle boast.[1] Bellarmine was not, indeed, a great Hebraist in the modern sense, but for his own age, and taking into account the variety of his activities, his achievements in this sphere were surely very remarkable.

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[1] This manuscript is described in detail by A. Vaccari in the Roman periodical *Gregorianum*, vol. II, 1921, pp. 579–588.

Among the treasures of the Louvain University library which perished in the fire of 1914 was a big Latin Bible annotated throughout by this most diligent of students. The notes in his microscopically small script which wriggled between the closely printed lines, and tumbled over one another down the margins and across the blank spaces at the top and bottom of each page, told of many a long hour stolen from rest or recreation. Most of them were in tiny Hebrew characters, but even those in Latin were very difficult to decipher because their author, intending them for no eye but his own, used a kind of home-made shorthand to lighten his labours.[2]

Louvain was a great centre of Scripture study in those days. A new edition of the Vulgate was preparing, and the splendid library of the Jesuits became a main focus of the work. Bellarmine consequently made the acquaintance of the distinguished scholars engaged in collating texts, one of whom, Francis Lucas, avowed in later years that his introduction to the young professor counted among the greatest privileges of his life. These learned men discovered that Robert knew Cardinal Sirleto personally, and in 1575 asked him to put a plan they had in mind before his very illustrious Lordship. They wished him, as being the most competent Catholic authority in Europe, to undertake the refutation of Le Fèvre's and Beza's annotations on the Scriptures. Bellarmine, after a charmingly modest reference to the happy day he had spent in the Cardinal's company fifteen years earlier, stated the Louvain doctors' request. Then, seizing the golden opportunity, he poured out all the thoughts about matters biblical which were absorbing his own attention at the moment. What precisely did the Council of Trent mean when it styled the Vulgate authentic? That was the main question that worried him. Opinions were sharply divided on the subject, some doctors contending that authenticity implied an almost verbal accuracy in the Vulgate version of the original documents of revelation, while others saw in the term only the Church's solemn approval of St. Jerome's work as her official Bible and as free from any errors against faith or morals. Father Robert is most anxious to have Sirleto's view, and wishes to know, also, what he thought about the extant Hebrew texts, about the unity of authorship so long attributed to the Septuagint, which was then being questioned, about the canonicity of the last seven chapters of the Book of Esther, etc., all showing very clearly how much the Bible and its deep problems occupied him during that wonderful week of years in Louvain.

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[1] *Autobiography*, n. xix.

[2] The Annotations are fully described in an interesting letter of Père Sommervogel to Père Couderc: *Le Vénérable Cardinal Bellarmin*, t. II, pp. 141–142; cf. also Le Bachelet, *Bellarmin et la Bible Sixto-Clémentine*, Paris, 1911, pp. 2–3.

3. After the Bible, patrology. The sixteenth century was a new ' age of the Fathers.' Heresy appealed back to them against the voice of the living Church, and sought to make Cyprian and Augustine talk with the accent of Wittenburg or Geneva. Protestantism of the more respectable kind, such as that of the later Elizabethan divines, based its arguments on the witness of the early Church as much as on Scriptures, the great aim being to show that all the men who counted in the first centuries of Christianity were good Anglicans in everything but name. No Catholic theologian, then, with zeal for the truth in his heart, could afford to neglect the Fathers. They were in a sense the foundation of the whole debate, and the side which knew them best was bound to win. Robert Bellarmine, always alert where the glory of God was concerned, realized this, and literally flung himself into the vast, uncharted sea of patristic literature. As distinct branches of learning, patrology and Church history were only struggling into existence when he took his plunge. He had no complete nor even partially complete editions of patristic texts to his hand, with the solitary exception of Marguerin de la Bigne's inadequate and suspect *Bibliotheca*, which was completed in 1575. Of that collection he appears to have made much use, as also of books like St. Jerome's *de Viris Illustribus*, Trittenheim's *Catalogue*, which was a kind of guide to the literary possessions of the Middle Ages, and the *Bibliotheca Sancta* of Sixtus of Siena. But for the most part he was left to his own devices, and had to hunt out his information as best he could. Almost all the great Jesuit editors flourished in the seventeenth century, Gretser, Fronto Ducaeus, Schott,

Petavius, etc., while Gallandi and the Benedictines of St. Maur belonged to a still later time.

The pact which he made with his conscience was somewhat as if a man of to-day should say to himself: ‘During the next few years I propose, with the help of God, to read right through Migne.’ The mere thought of it is enough to make one's head dizzy. Yet he settled down to the gigantic task and carried it through by some miracle of endurance. And not only did he read the great Church Fathers, but devoted himself also to establishing the authenticity or spuriousness of the various texts attributed to them. As he went on with his studies, he recorded the conclusions which he reached in some note-books, meaning them to be purely and simply a help to his own memory. These he revised constantly in the light of further research, amplifying or modifying them as the case required. Thus at first he believed John Gerson to be the author of the *Imitation of Christ*, but the *Vindiciis Kempensibus* of Father Herbert Rosweyd convinced him that the honour belonged to the man to whom it does belong.

He had not intended originally to give his notes to the world, but the manuscript of them got into other hands, and liberties were taken with it which left him no option but publication. The preface to the first edition (1613) is very interesting.

> Forty years ago [he says] when I was preparing to teach theology, I devoted myself with some diligence to the study of the Fathers and ancient writers, both in order to learn their doctrine, and to mark off their genuine works from spurious ones which bore their names. And so I put together a little book, *De Scriptoribus Ecclesiasticis*, adding in each case a note wherein I discussed which of the works were certainly authentic, which doubtful, and which obviously supposititious. This book of mine got into alien hands, its author partly unwitting and partly unwilling. Wherefore, lest after my death it should be published in a mutilated and imperfect state, as often happens to such books, I have now in extreme old age revised and polished it up, and am giving it to the printers that it may be of more general service, or at least not offend anybody by appearing full of mistakes when I am gone.

The little phrase, *non indiligenter incubui*, is mild enough to make one laugh in view of what follows. ‘Not all the ecclesiastical writers whose works are extant find a place in my list, but only those who wrote with distinction between 1500 B.C. and 1500 A.D., that is from Moses the first ecclesiastical writer down to our own times.' These dates might appear at first sight to condemn Father Robert as, after all, only an amateurish person. Could anyone, with an ounce of real scholarship in him, dare to deal in such heroic numbers? The only fair way of deciding the point is to examine the text. On the second page he rejects the opinion of St. Jerome that Moses wrote ten of the Psalms, a decided gesture which no amateur or smatterer would have had the nerve to make. Discussing on the next page the authorship of the Book of Job, he is scholar enough to be able to make an argument out of the Arabic words embedded in the Hebrew text. Every suggestion he puts forward is backed at once by illustrious names. When dealing with King David, he quotes, giving minute references, Chrysostom, Theodoret, Cassiodorus, Euthymius, Augustine, Hilary, and Jerome, and to decide a point in connection with the Book of Wisdom, eight other Fathers are paraded before us.

All through the work we find the same superabundant erudition. He had set out to discuss the authenticity or non-authenticity of certain works, but he was not content with that large undertaking. A short biography of each author was provided, little models, in their way, of careful, painstaking research. When writing about the Apostle St. James he discusses in a thorough and really masterly fashion the troublesome title 'brother of the Lord' which is given him in the Gospels, and there is many a similar brilliant excursus. Very interesting, too, are his paragraphs *De auctore libri qui Pastor inscribitur*. 'Who this Hermas was, is a great question,' he says. Origen, Eusebius and St. Jerome held that he was the Hermas saluted by St. Paul in his Epistle to the Romans, chapter xvi. But the librarian Anastasius in his *Lives of the Popes* contended that Hermas was the brother of Pope St. Pius. Now these two opinions cannot both be right, is Bellarmine's comment, because between that salute of St. Paul and the Pontificate of St. Pius yawns a gulf of at least a hundred years, and it is not likely that St. Paul sent his greeting to a new-born baby.

On St. Dionysius the Areopagite, our critic is not so sure of himself. He notes that Valla, Erasmus, 'and other sciolists' denied the authenticity of the works attributed to him, and endeavours to answer their arguments. But the progress of scholarship has shown that the sciolists were right after all. On the other hand, he scores in a more delicate point of criticism. Erasmus repudiated the *Homilies on the Acts* as being unworthy of St. John Chrysostom's genius. 'With all respect to Erasmus,' says Father Robert, 'I feel quite sure that the Homilies are Chrysostom's very own.' Then he gives his proofs, and the progress of scholarship has justified him completely. The principles he worked on have a thoroughly modern air, as when he points out that a little brochure *De excellentia B. Virginis Mariae* can hardly be by St. Anselm, as was supposed, because it has neither his style nor his customary grave manner. In the same way, he denies on internal evidence that Richard of St. Victor was the author of a certain treatise on 'Exceptions,' commonly attributed to him. One of his proofs is rather amusing, but sound enough in its way. Richard of St. Victor was a Scot, and Scotsmen have the reputation, rightly or wrongly, of being mildly interested in Scotland. Now in this book there is a chapter on islands, and as Scotland may be regarded as an island with England growing out of it like a big promontory, it would surely have found honourable mention in this chapter, if Richard had been the author. But the contrary is the case, and, stranger still, when describing the famous cities of the world the author, whoever he is, does not so much as name Edinburgh or Aberdeen.

In the course of his book, Bellarmine deals with more than five hundred ecclesiastical writers, many of them being out of the way people such as Hatligarius Cameracensis, whom even well-read theologians would find it hard to identify. Church history and canon law were not forgotten either. He seems to have read the whole corpus of this latter chaotic subject, and at least summaries of all the Councils, while his devotion to church history is sufficiently attested by the really splendid chronological chart which he drew up to help him in his studies.

Taking everything into account, *De Scriptoribus Ecclesiasticis* must be pronounced an astoundingly learned and virile book. Had Father Bellarmine written nothing else he would still stand out among the scholars of his age. It was reprinted more than twenty times, and had for editors such distinguished men as Sirmond, Labbé, Oudin, du Saussay, etc. Labbé, the famous collector of the documents relating to the Councils, said that he doubted whether any book had appeared in his day calculated to do more good or be more serviceable to students than this small, unpretentious volume.[1] Of course it is now out of date, a sunken, moss-covered milestone on the high road of criticism. But the works of men can only be judged fairly in relation to their opportunities, and Aristotle's glory is not dimmed because modern school-girls could teach him a good deal about sun, moon, and stars.

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[1] Preface to *Dissertatio de Scrip. Eccles.*, Paris, 1660.

Nor are we yet at the end of Father Robert's scholarly activities. The list of his labours included also diligent and wide reading in the literature of heresy. Towards the end of a business letter to the General, Father Mercurian, 1 August 1573, he says:

> I wish now to mention a little personal matter. Two years ago I was given permission through our Procurator, Father Claysson, to read the books of the heretics, but only under certain conditions. One of these conditions was that I should not take any such book to my room. I have found this rather a worry, as all the heretical books are kept in a cupboard in Father Rector's room, and I cannot get at them without disturbing his Reverence and inconveniencing myself. This inconvenience becomes acute when I have occasion to study some big point of controversy which necessitates frequent reference to a particular book. I would be grateful, then, for a more extended permission, or at least such as Father Harlemius has been given, if it seems good to your Paternity.[1]

4. In his Autobiography Bellarmine is silent about his studies. All he tells us is that during his first year at Louvain he did nothing but preach, and in his seventh and last year, nothing but teach, while in the intervening five years he both preached and taught. We have seen something of the labour which that teaching and preaching involved, and we have also glanced at the occupations of his leisure hours. But it would be a great mistake to think that that was the end of the story. In addition to being professor and preacher at Louvain, he was the spiritual director of the house, an office which carried with it the duty of giving weekly conferences to his brethren. He prepared these intimate talks with great care. In 1899, the Bollandist, Van Ortroy, published a selection of them under the title, *Exhortationes Domesticae*, and they constitute what is, in some ways, the most interesting of all Bellarmine's books. The real Robert appears in these pages as nowhere else, and a very different Robert he is from the aloof, cold Cardinal of non-Catholic tradition. His mask seems to drop from him while talking thus familiarly as brother to brothers, letting us see the features of a soul so brave and

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[1] Le Bachelet, *Bellarmin avant son Cardinalat*, pp. 84–85.

gentle that we cannot help falling in love with its beauty. These domestic exhortations will often be referred to in later chapters, but an extract from one which he gave at this time may be set down here for the light it throws on his attitude to studies and their distractions. He was speaking on the eve of the Circumcision, and took the circumcision of the heart for his theme:

> These hearts of ours, brothers, go out to creatures, either drawn by pleasure or driven by necessity. And it is in this fact of experience that I find my biggest difficulty. For though we may keep our hearts safe from the allurements of pleasure by mortification, how are we going to make them secure against the attack of daily necessity? Every art, if it is to be learned well, requires a man's entire thought and energy, and we have many arts to learn and teach as perfectly as we can. Consequently, we are obliged to give them all our attention, and how then are we to circumcise our hearts and detach them from such engrossing things as philosophy and literature? You might say that this is easy enough if the love of God possesses us, and if the studies to which we devote our lives are all for Him. Yes, but that is just the crux of the whole matter, to establish the reign of God's love perfectly in our hearts while these same hearts are surrendered entirely to study. Even though a man begins his studies for the love of God, yet, while applying himself to them with all his might, he becomes so interested and absorbed as to think of nothing else, and so either forgets God or but rarely lifts up his heart to Him. And to prevent this, I think there are three safeguards which we must employ.
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> The first is to understand and realize that it is not impossible to keep our hearts circumcised from the love of created things, even in the most exacting and important occupations. . . . Our Father Ignatius was admirable in this respect, for when busiest governing his whole Order with such careful diligence, he remained so free and so much the captain of his soul as to say that no misfortune could shake his peace, unless perhaps the ruin of the whole Society. Even that disaster he felt could not so disturb him that he might not hope by one quarter of an hour of prayer to regain his composure.
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> The second safeguard is to understand, and seriously to persuade ourselves, that it is essential if we give all our energies to external occupations or studies, *not* to give them all our time. This is demanded both by justice and charity. For why should others drink from my spring while I alone remain thirsty? How can I love my neighbour as myself, if I do not love myself? And how can I be said to love myself if I devote no time to my own progress, but all of it to that of others? Next, charity demands it. I cannot serve my neighbour if I am not myself a good man. If someone were to give all his days and nights to the business of others, so as

not even to have time for his meals or sleep, he might seem for a day or two to be helping his neighbour wonderfully, but the third day, down he goes, and that is the end of his helping. Just the same is to be said of our souls. The man who pours himself out in external work soon grows weak and worldly ; an unprofitable servant, even if he were the wisest doctor on earth. We have an example in the vines. When pruned, they seem to be deprived of their shoots, and so of the grapes that might grow on the shoots. But in reality they are being helped to produce more and better wine than ever.

In the third place, we learn in detail from our rules the amount of time that must be devoted to the purification of our hearts. It is there prescribed that each must give the allotted space to prayer, meditation, and spiritual reading, with all diligence in the Lord. If anyone wishes to know whether he is doing this with all diligence, he may easily find out by observing the zeal with which keen scholastics prosecute their studies. Such men rarely or never suffer from spiritual distractions in their work. But do the distractions of study never or rarely intrude into their prayers ? The diligent scholastic never feels the time of study too long, but, on the contrary, is always grumbling about its brevity, and on the look-out for early Masses, etc. What about the time of Mass itself, though ? Does that not seem to many a little eternity ? I have often heard professors taken to task publicly for being too long over their *lectiones*, but still more often have I heard priests admonished for being too expeditious with theirs.[1]

Again, our diligent scholastic reads his book not in a perfunctory or mechanical way, but attentively and thoughtfully, so that he may understand it. How often, on the other hand, do we priests read our Office by rote, like boys reciting a lesson which they have got by heart, whereas it should be said as a prayer or hymn of praise to God. If a man only knew how to say his hours, not parrotwise but with all his heart, the psalms with the spirit of him who made them, and the lessons devoutly attentive, as to a letter, consoling, chiding, instructing, straight from God, ah, then indeed, the Office would not seem too long, and distractions would vanish, and the soul go forward with giant strides. To do this it ought to be enough to remember that the Most High Majesty of God deigns to look upon us, poor little worms that we are, to listen to us and to give us His gracious replies. Certainly, if our Father Ignatius had said his Office in a merely mechanical way, it would not have been necessary for the doctors to stop him, lest he should go blind from the abundance of his tears. St. Bonaventure relates that St. Francis used always to read his Office standing and bareheaded, with never a break, even though he was on a journey and had got caught in the rain. That was because he had God before his eyes. And supposing, not God, but the Pope met us in the street, and we had to address him, would we keep our heads covered, no matter how heavily it rained?[1]

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[1] There is a play on the word *lectiones* in this passage which it is impossible to reproduce in English. *Lectio* means both a professor's lecture and a ' lesson ' in the Divine Office which a priest has to say every day.

In spite of his other exacting duties, and the weak health from which he suffered, Father Robert was to be found regularly in his confessional at this time. Years afterwards, he confided to his friend, Mgr. Inviziati, that oftentimes in Louvain, after spending the whole of Saturday in church hearing confessions, he had to begin preparing his sermon for the next day, very late at night, because his work as a professor gave him no opportunity of preparing it earlier.[2] He was a great favourite with the students, as a confessor, but there were two classes of people whose confessions he was not at all anxious to hear,—women and business men. The Latin of the ladies he found as unintelligible as their Flemish and, not knowing much about Belgian weights and measures, he was unable to cope with the consciences of shop-keepers when they told him of their dark doings in trade. That was the reason why he showed himself very disinclined, 'salva semper obedientia', to undertake a course of sermons at Antwerp in 1574. The Italian merchants who were very numerous there would be sure to come bothering him with conundrums on the seventh commandment, he said.[3]

These Louvain years were not all quiet secluded ones of study and prayer. War and the rumour of war filled men's thoughts. On 1 April 1572, the *Gueux* surprised and captured Brill in the name of William of Orange, and at once a large portion of Holland rose against the Duke of Alva. The terrible official murder of the martyrs of Gorcum showed plainly the anti-Catholic hate which animated the insurgents. William the Silent immediately returned into Belgium and swept round Brabant with a huge army of Germans and Walloons. Louvain, which was almost an open town, seemed certain to fall into his hands, and the Jesuits knew very well that if it did they would be the first to die. The only course left to them was flight; so, cutting their hair short that their tonsures might pass unnoticed, and disguising themselves as best they could, in lay clothes, they set off for different places of safety. Father Bellarmine, who was weak and out of health at the time, was instructed to take the road to Douai.

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[1] *Exhortationes Domesticae Venerabilis Servi Dei Cardinalis Roberti Bellarmini*, Bruxellis, 1899, pp. 18–21.

[2] *Summarium*, n. 29, par. 72.

[3] *Summarium*, n. 28; Le Bachelet, *Bellarmin avant son Cardinalat*, pp. 89–90, 95–96.

In after life, he told Cardinal Crescenzio, St. Philip's great friend, the story of his adventures, as usual with that apologetic laugh in which he used to try and smother the first person singular. 'Mi disse ridendo', says the narrator. It appears that, after he had gone a little way on his journey, he fainted one evening, and fell down 'like a dead man' by the roadside. When at length he came to himself and looked up, his tired eyes saw a gallows all prepared for its next victim. With a great thrill at heart he thought that this might be a hint from Heaven of approaching martyrdom and, turning to his companion, said: 'Cheer up, brother dear; it looks as if this scaffold had been made ready for us.' But just then a coach came flying towards them at top speed. The driver reigned in when he caught sight of the two stricken men, and, though a heretic, willingly made room for Father Robert, who by this time was half dead from exhaustion. When the two fugitives reached Douai, they found that they had escaped the perils of war only to encounter the perils of pestilence, which was then raging in the town. But from these too, says the Autobiography, God was their Deliverer. At the close of August that year, the Massacre of St. Bartholomew cut short Prince William's campaign. The Duke of Alva returned with his vengeful Spaniards and, under the shelter of his strong, ruthless arm, the Jesuits were enabled to resume their old life of prayer and peace. Very soon Bellarmine was at work again, preaching and teaching as if nothing had happened to him.[1]

It was Father Robert's custom to rise an hour earlier than the rest of the community, in order that he might say the Little Office of Our Lady, which he had never omitted since he was a child. His spiritual life was full of such 'extras.' Among his own brethren he was reverenced already as a saint. One of them, who had long been suffering from an open wound in his leg which no doctor could heal, felt confident that if he were to receive Holy Communion from Father Bellarmine's hands he would be cured. And he was cured, though that humble priest never suspected the reason why he was asked so suddenly to go to the sick-room with the Blessed Sacrament.[1]

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[1] *Summarium*, n. 28. This incident is also related in the *Autobiography*, n. xxi, but with some minor variations. Crescenzio says emphatically that the coachman was a heretic. Bellarmine says with equal emphasis that he was not only a good Catholic who heard Mass every day, but that he made a vow on this occasion to hear two Masses daily in future. Crescenzio's memory probably played him false. It was not a good one by all accounts.

5. Father Robert took the four solemn vows of profession on 6 July 1572. He had not then been the required time in his Order, nor had he made the customary third year of novitiate. But Father Mutius Vitelleschi, who later became General, said that, in his case, precautions and testing were unnecessary. His perfect observance of rule, and his holy and edifying life were sufficient reasons for dispensing with the usual prerequisites to profession.[2]

At this point, another great and good man enters into our story. St. Charles Borromeo had begun his marvellous apostolate in Milan, and one of his cherished plans was to collect for that city all the best priests he could find. So persistently and audaciously did he pursue this project, that even his dear friend St. Philip Neri rebelled, and told him straight out what he thought about him:

> It grieved me very much to have been unable to wish you farewell. God alone knows how dearly I love you. I cannot bear the idea of not giving you the priests you ask for, and yet I am unable to comply with your request without injuring our Congregation. I wish to Heaven it was only a question of my convenience. You accuse me of not being mortified because I will not let you have Father Baronius, but I am certain, and by your leave I am going to tell you frankly, that you yourself are a much bigger sinner in this respect. Many people, including the Bishops of Rimini and Vercelli, say this about you, and also that you are not above downright robbery. When you set eyes on a capable man, you immediately try to allure him to Milan. You are a most daring and audacious robber of holy and learned souls, and as the proverb has it, 'you despoil one altar in order to adorn another.' Please forgive the liberties I am taking. *Amicus Socrates*, *amicus Plato*, *magis amica veritas*. Filippo Neri.[3]

In October 1572, St. Charles had handed over the College of Brera to the Jesuits, in order that they might begin courses in letters, science, and theology there. He was naturally most anxious to get the best possible professors for the new College, in which his priests were to have their training. During the following month, he wrote to Mgr. Spetiano, his representative at Rome, asking him to do his utmost to obtain either Father Gagliardo or Father Bellarmine, preferably Father Bellarmine, as the better man of the two. This matter led to a great deal of correspondence. St. Charles was impatient to have his man and the Jesuit Official, Benedict Palmio, had a good deal of difficulty in soothing him. On 21 January 1573, the saintly Cardinal wrote direct to Father Polanco:

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[1] *Summarium*, n. 29, par. 37.

[2] *Summarium*, n. 4.

[3] This sharp but delightful letter is put in its true context in that magnificent work, *San Carlo Borromeo nel terzo Centenario della Canonizzazione* (Milan, 1908–1910), of which our present Holy Father, Pius XI, was one of the editors. It is surely the most learned, elaborate, and fascinating account of a saint's life ever written.

> Not having been able to obtain Father Gagliardo from the Duke of Savoy, even as a temporary arrangement until Father Bellarmine arrives, I again beg your Reverence as strongly as ever I can to insist with the Flemish province that this Father be allowed to come as soon as possible. We need him all the more for our studies, because we are not at all satisfied with the Father who is now lecturing in his place provisionally. It is no good your Reverence suggesting any doubt about the coming of this Father or going on proposing other men, because I am resolutely determined not to allow you to go back on the promise you made to me in Rome. . . . It is only fair that you should grant me this, and I am in good hopes of obtaining the favour from your Reverence, to whom I most heartily commend myself as a brother.
>
> IL CARDINAL BORROMEO.[1]

But San Carlo's pleading was of no avail, even though he had Father Polanco on his side as a 'buon solicitatore.' The Belgian Fathers held on tightly to their prize, and for this they are surely not to be blamed. One of them, the Rector of Antwerp, wrote to Father Polanco in Spanish: 'If my opinion is worth anything, Father Bellarmine is of great importance to the College of Louvain. His lectures on theology are the best in the whole University, and if he is removed the province has nobody competent to take his place. . . . The reputation of the College is due to him.'[2] Father Robert himself was, as usual, blithely indifferent to his fate. In a letter to his Order's secretary at this time, 3 February 1573, he says:

> Father Provincial thinks that I should send you two words about my daily fortunes over here. As to my health, it keeps so uniformly

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[1] Le Bachelet, *Bellarmin avant son Cardinalat*, p. 81.

[2] Le Bachelet, *l.c.*, p. 82, note 3.

> good that I can hardly believe it. And as to everything else, I am quite content to stay on here as long as it shall please holy obedience, even if it is to be for the rest of my life. When holy obedience shall please to decide otherwise I shall not be the less contented. By the grace of God our Lord, I find myself quite indifferent in this respect, as I desire to be in every other respect too.[1]

In 1574 he had more than two hundred students in his class of theology, only a few of whom were Jesuits. For several months during that year he had to do the work of two professors, as his only colleague, Father Harlemius, was appointed Rector.

All this time, St. Charles continued to pull strings with the greatest diligence. He was not going to be happy until he had his Bellarmine. Once again he wrote to Rome pointing out all the good that the Father would do in Milan, and reminding the General that Flanders had already had five years of his services. When the Belgian Provincial learned that St. Charles had not yet succeeded in robbing him he wrote a glowing letter to Mercurian: 'Your Paternity has given us immense joy,' he says, 'by your decision to leave us Father Bellarmine. We thank you a thousand times for the favour, and we will strive to show our gratitude for the fatherly affection which inspired it.'[2] At this period (1575) St. Charles was being abetted in his designs by Father Robert's old Provincial, Father Adorno. Keep on worrying the authorities and you will get him, was his advice to the Cardinal. St. Charles put the advice in practice immediately in a last letter to the General:

> My Brother, I find that Father Morales has been taken away from me, much to the loss of the College of Brera. Neither has the promise been kept which was made to me a long time ago with respect to Father Bellarmine. Accordingly, I determined to make a fresh application to your Reverence, begging you, as I now do, to give such a positive order to the Father that nothing can hinder his coming to Milan. . . .
>
> Your Reverend Paternity's Brother,
> IL CARDINAL SANTA PRASSEDE.[3]

Father Mercurian could hardly have resisted such an appeal, if there had not been another claimant before whom all had to give way. Father Robert's friend and warm admirer, the Irishman, Sir Andrew Wyse, spoke of him in enthusiastic terms to Cardinal Giacomo Savelli, the Vicar of Pope Gregory XIII. Cardinal Savelli, according to Wyse's account, thereupon persuaded the Holy Father to have the distinguished Louvain professor recalled to Rome in order that he might be employed for the advantage of the Church at large.[1] But there was, also, another and more personal reason why he should return. Father Robert was a true Italian, and about the spring of 1576 a great home-sickness and longing came over him for the skies and sunshine of his native land. He grew ill almost to the point of death, and though he expressed no wish, his brethren in their love for him soon guessed where the trouble lay. On May 20, the Provincial put the matter before the Roman authorities. 'Father Bellarmine,' he said, 'is possessed of a great longing to return to Italy, and I am afraid lest the deferring of his recall might make him very sad. I think it best then, in our Lord, that your Paternity should bid him return in the autumn. It would grieve us all very much indeed if this good Father who has deserved so well of our Province, and is so excellently suited for the great offices of the Society, should be deprived of his consolation on our account.'[2] The General, thus urged by Pope and Provincial, sent the required summons towards the end of July 1576. 'He went away,' says the College Chronicle for that year, 'leaving behind him the shining memory of his goodness and learning.'

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[1] Le Bachelet, *Bellarmin avant son Cardinalat*, p. 83.

[2] Le Bachelet, *l.c.*, p. 89, note 1.

[3] Le Bachelet, *l.c.*, p. 101. In remembrance of St. Charles, Cardinal Bellarmine, in extreme old age, changed his title of Santa Maria in Via, for that of Santa Prassede, which was then vacant.

On his side, Father Robert never to his dying day forgot Belgium and all that it had been to him. When he was Archbishop of Capua and world-famous, an English gentleman asked him, on one occasion, where he had acquired his marvellous stores of learning. Gently declining the big adjective, he answered, 'this learning, such as it is, I owe first of all to God, and then to a sojourn of seven years which I made in Louvain when I was young.'[3] When he became a Cardinal and had it in his power to give some tangible proof of his gratitude to Belgium, he did not forget. Out of his scanty resources he desired to make a personal contribution to the 'war-fund' of the Catholic theologians in that country, and thus it was that the *Musée Bellarmin* came into existence. It was a foundation for the upkeep of a select body of Jesuits whose duty was to combat heresy with their tongues and their pens. Among the many distinguished men who belonged to the *Musée* were Fathers Coster, Becan, Lessius, and Rosweyde. They preached regularly against heresy, wrote a vast number of polemical pamphlets, and organized controversial conferences. The conferences of Antwerp became celebrated. In the seventeenth century the *Musée* had its head-quarters at Malines, and did valiant service against Jansenism. Up to the end of his life Bellarmine continued his liberalities towards it. Eventually it merged into the 'Musée Historique,' as the circumstances which it had been established to meet had entirely changed. By the request of the Belgian Government, the 'Musée Historique' engaged on a great national history of Belgium under the title, *Analecta Belgica*, but the suppression of the Society of Jesus in 1773 put an end to that fine undertaking.

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[1] Bartoli, *Vita*, p. 85.

[2] Le Bachelet, *Bellarmin avant son Cardinalat*, pp. 101–102.

[3] Santagata, *Istoria della Compagnia di Gesù appartenente al Regno di Napoli*, Pars 3a, p. 88.

Bellarmine's long journey home began on September 1. De Requescens, Alva's successor, had died suddenly, and the interregnum which followed before the arrival of Don John of Austria left Belgium at the mercy of the fierce elements that raged around it. It was no easy task for a Catholic, much less a priest, and least of all a Jesuit, to travel unscathed through a country torn by the wildest and most lawless of politico-religious wars. Father Robert was therefore obliged once more to put aside his habit and his name. He decided to be known as Signor Romolo, and decked himself out in the unaccustomed finery of a gentleman of fashion. Then with sword and pistols all complete, he swaggered away on horseback to find his fortunes. It is interesting to note how often in his life he had dealings with Englishmen. On this occasion he was accompanied by no fewer than five of them, though previous biographers say that he set out alone.[1]

As the little company went on their way they fell in with another body of horsemen, bound like themselves for Italy. There was safety in numbers in those rough times, so the two parties joined forces and fraternized very amicably. The newcomers, who were Protestants, soon grew to like the pleasant, obliging, and intelligent Signor Romolo, and little guessing who he was, voted him eventually captain of the expedition. He thanked them and God for that courtesy, and then on the pretence of reconnoitring as became a good captain or of ordering the dinner at some wayside inn, he used to gallop ahead whenever he spied a bend in the distance or a wood that promised seclusion. Once out of sight, he dismounted and, letting his horse graze by the roadside, proceeded to say his Office in peace or to pray otherwise as his heart prompted him.

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[1] The letter of Louvain's Rector to Father General Mercurian, 8 September 1576, puts this point beyond dispute. 'Pater Robertus Bellarminus hinc abiit Romam, die primo Septembris, habens in suo comitatu quinque Anglos . . .' Le Bachelet, *Bellarmin avant son Cardinalat*, p. 102.

The party crossed the Alps, probably by the Great St. Bernard, and as they passed through Aosta we may guess that the grey Hospice among the snows offered them its kindly shelter. During the first stages of the journey, the captain suffered a great deal and looked wretchedly pale and haggard, but as they went on amidst the valleys and vineyards of Piedmont, the colour came back to his cheeks. Every breath of his native air was like wine to him, working magically, he said, on both body and soul. Very soon the last trace of his old heaviness was gone, and he became as merry as the blackbirds that whistled their welcome to him from every hedge along the road. On reaching Genoa he saw his new-found friends to an inn, and there bade them an affectionate good-bye. Next morning they trooped out to see the sights, and among other places wandered into the Jesuit Church. It was Mass-time, and as the priest turned round to say, 'Dominus vobiscum' they received the surprise of their lives, for who should it be but their beloved and debonair Signor Romolo!

Robert met with a royal welcome from his old friend Father Adorno. Two letters from the General were waiting, one to caution him against passing near Milan where San Carlo was in ambush, and the other bidding him visit Montepulciano that he might comfort his lately-bereaved and lonely father, Vincenzo. His holiday in his native town soon turned into a great and fruitful mission. Retreats and conferences were the order of the day. Many who knew him as a little boy were there to greet him, greetings all the warmer because of rumours that had come of his martyrdom by the Calvinists of Flanders. But one face, the dearest to him on earth, was absent; for his mother had been three months in the grave to which austerities and the grim struggle with poverty had brought her prematurely.[1]

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[1] The story of Bellarmine's journey home is given by Fuligatti, *Vita*, pp. 54–55; Bartoli, *Vita*, pp. 99–101; *Autobiography*, nn. xxiii–xxiv.

CHAPTER VII

PROFESSOR IN ROME

1. Gregory XIII sat in the Chair of St. Peter when Father Bellarmine reached Rome. One of the deepest convictions of that wise Pope and 'very fine old man,'[1] was that the tide of heresy could best be stemmed by education. The priests especially who had to meet the enemy face to face in the lost lands of England and Germany needed to be thoroughly practised in the strategy of their new warfare. For that purpose he had founded or reorganized no fewer than twenty-three colleges and seminaries in Rome and other suitable places. The first of these institutions to enjoy his liberality was the German College which St. Ignatius had established in 1553, but which, twenty years later, was on the point of being closed for lack of funds. Gregory came to the rescue in the nick of time, and endowed the institution out of the Papal treasury. In 1579, it was England's turn. The little colony of students, who resided with their Welsh Rector, Dr. Clenock, in the old Hospice of St. Thomas of Canterbury, was transformed by Papal brief into a national college under the direction of the Jesuits. Only one thing more remained to put the crown on the Pope's munificence. The great Roman College, on which the others depended for their instruction, was itself so poor that the fourth general congregation of the Society of Jesus had to appeal for assistance. When Gregory consulted Cardinal Contarelli on the matter, he received for answer an application of Nabuchodonosor's dream: 'Holy Father, you and your predecessors have built a statue like to that of the King of Babylon. The German College with its rich endowments is the head of gold; the English College is the breast of silver; the Greek College is the belly of brass; the Maronite College the legs of iron, and the Roman College, which supports them all, the feet of

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[1] Montaigne, *Travels in Italy*, Eng. tr., vol. II, p. 82.

clay.'[1] The Pope was greatly impressed by this parable, and set to work with such energy that by 1584 the west and south sides of the magnificent Gregorian University were completed. Buildings and endowments, however, are only the *corpus vile* of an educational scheme. The teaching is its soul, and that soul, though vigorous enough on the side of abstract theology, took, in those days, only a languid interest in the vicissitudes of Christian truth throughout the centuries.

As far back as 1561, when Robert Bellarmine was himself a student of the Roman College, a chair of controversial theology existed among its departments. The men responsible for the curriculum saw clearly that scholastic theology was not by itself sufficient equipment for times when every dogma had to pass the fiery test of history, and when the Centuriators of Magdeburg were giving a new trend to the religious debate, in their efforts to show the width of the chasm which separated contemporary Roman usages from the simple rites of primitive Christianity. Unfortunately, however, the chair of controversies was not a success, and had to be discontinued. Ten years later another effort was made under the direction of Ledesma, a brilliant theologian, but a rather unpractical professor. His lectures were too disconnected to be of much service, and after a year of experimenting, the course lapsed once again until resumed in 1574 by Father Fernandez. It is quite plain that the authorities were feeling their way all the time, and while recognizing the need were puzzled how to meet it until Providence sent Robert Bellarmine. He was appointed to the difficult post shortly after his arrival in Rome, and began the great work of his life with the *prosit* of both Pope and General to encourage him. The truly wonderful thing about this beginning was its assurance. He was very young, only thirty-four, and he had no long tradition to guide him. Controversial theology, as found in the books, was a chaos and not a science, yet he started out on his explorations like one who knew every foot of the ground. A fragment of the inaugural address which he delivered on 26 November 1576 is extant in manuscript, and we have besides the more elaborate version which he prepared later as a preface for the first volume of his Controversies. It is an intensely interesting

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[1] Bartoli, *Memorie Storiche*, l. v, c. ix; Rinaldi, *La fondazione del Collegio Romano*, p. 87. The ceremony at the laying of the first stone of the College and the subsequent progress of the work are described by Pastor, *Geschichte der Päpste*, *Gregor* XIII, pp. 809–811.

THE ROMAN COLLEGE OR GREGORIAN UNIVERSITY.

document as showing the spirit in which he faced his gigantic task.

> To-day, gentlemen [he begins] we approach those questions which are at issue between the Church of the living God and her rebellious and fugitive sons. . . . My endeavour shall be, with the help of Heaven, to gather all these diverse, multitudinous questions together and weld them into unity. It will not be an easy task. In my poor judgment it would require for its adequate performance knowledge wellnigh infinite, not only of various sciences and languages, but of the length and breadth of human history as well. Since I am sadly aware of the smallness of my own little stock of knowledge, and yet must needs bear the burden imposed upon me, I shall try at least to make up by hard work and diligence for the backwardness of my wits. Even should you find me lacking in the niceties of learning, you will not be able to reproach me with want of industry and care. . . . The importance of these disputations which I am undertaking may easily be seen from the fact that they comprise the larger and more necessary part of all theology. Our concern will not be with little things that make no difference however they stand, nor with the subtleties of metaphysics which a man may ignore without being any the worse for it, but with God, with Christ, with the Church, with the Sacraments, and with a multitude of other matters which pertain to the very foundations of our faith.

Next, like a skilful general, he proceeds in a few bold strokes to unfold his plan of campaign :

> The enemy of the human race, though he is the father of confusion, yet goes to work with a certain method in his attack on the Church of Christ. He started in the earliest ages with an assault on the first article of the Creed, having for his allies such heretics as the Manichaeans and Gnostics. The whole aim of these men was to overthrow belief in God, the Father Almighty, Creator of heaven and earth. When that attack failed, the devil in the third century directed his efforts against the second article, wherein the divinity of Christ is declared. Praxeas, Sabellius, Paul of Samosata, Arius, Eunomius, and others rose to do battle for him, and when their offensive too was frustrated, he succeeded in enlisting a new host to carry on the war against the inter-related third, fourth, fifth, sixth, and seventh articles. . . . Next, with Photius and his followers, came the great attack on the Holy Ghost. That, too, according to the divine guarantee was a failure, and the devil, seeing all his assaults on Father, Son, and Holy Ghost to be useless, turned with savage fury on the ninth and tenth articles : 'I believe in the Holy Catholic Church, the Communion of Saints, the Forgiveness of sins.' From the year 1000 A.D., these two

articles have been the main object of heretical attack, Berengarians, Waldenses, Albigenses, Wiclifites, Hussites, Lutherans, Zwinglians, Calvinists, Anabaptists, etc., each in turn doing their utmost to overthrow them.

Since, therefore, the heresies of this age are practically all concerned with the ninth and tenth articles of the Creed, we shall confine our lectures to those two articles. We shall begin by treating of the Church, and in this disputation we shall have, first of all, to deal with Christ Himself who is the Church's Head and Ruler. Then we shall go on to discuss that part of the Church which is labouring on earth under its visible head, the Pope. Next the Church suffering will claim our attention, and finally that part of the Church which triumphs blessedly with Christ in Heaven. At this point we shall have occasion to speak of the veneration and invocation of the Saints, of relics, sacred images, and similar matters. Having done so, we shall proceed to treat of the Communion of Saints, under which heading the Sacraments may be grouped. Each Sacrament will have a whole treatise to itself, as there is no part of Catholic dogma so cried down and criticized by the heretics. Last of all, we shall deal with the tenth article of the Creed to which appertain various debatable matters concerning grace, justification, free-will, and merit.

2. The manuscript of the present book included at first a very long chapter in which an attempt was made to summarize one of Bellarmine's treatises. It seemed the only way to give an idea of his power as a writer, but on second thoughts this section was omitted. Technical theology would not be likely to interest anyone except a professional theologian, and he knows his Bellarmine already. There was a time when theories of grace and free-will used to stir the hearts of common men like the blast of a trumpet, but that age has gone with its ruffs and rapiers. Besides, the religious debate has passed through many phases since the reformers first began to wield the axe of criticism high up among the branches of the great tree of Catholic tradition. To-day, the axe is laid to the root of the tree, and the wordy warfare of long ago might seem to casual modern eyes as small a thing as the bows and arrows of Agincourt compared with the great guns of the Marne. It would be a wrong impression, indeed, for of the old apologists it might be said just as truly as of the new:

> Neque enim levia aut ludicra petuntur
> Praemia, sed Turni de vita et sanguine certant.

But still the point of view of Bellarmine and his contemporaries is not ours. They emphasized arguments with which we do not find ourselves in sympathy, and they are very diffuse over matters which, for us, are out of date. Thus the Protestants were given to writing books in proof of the Pope's being Antichrist, and Bellarmine was, of course, obliged to notice that nonsense. He did so to the extent of thirty thousand words, and very telling words they were, but for present-day purposes they have no value whatever. Nor are these the only dead pages in his great volumes. Time demands a heavy toll of all such work, dimming its lustre, and blunting the fine edge of its opportuneness. Except where some happy grace of style immortalizes their form, the great books of other ages continue to be read and reverenced only because of the constant doctoring to which they are subjected. Browning spoke with some scorn of the ' pretty lying ' by which old classics are ' improved to suit the modern taste ', and it must be admitted that Bellarmine would need a great deal of ' improving ' before his scholarship and style assumed the airs of twentieth century treatises. This fact, as will be seen in a later section, hardly detracts at all from the glory that belongs to him as a theologian, but it does seem to justify the omission of a chapter loaded with the details of his theology. Instead of such a wearisome digression it will be more to the point to try and piece together whatever scraps of personal history we possess.

Father Robert's lecture seems to have been the first each day, and was probably delivered at some unearthly hour before the rest of the world took breakfast,[1] as there were several others to follow in the course of the morning. Had we been able to peep through the windows of his classroom in the year 1579 we should have noticed how packed it was, and what a brilliant pattern the cloaks of the audience made. There were red-robed Germans there, side by side with men in white garments from Italian towns, and others in sober black from far-away, tragical England. And these colours were symbolic, for many a confessor and martyr soon to die, sat then at the feet of Bellarmine. In an English book, we may be pardoned for dwelling a little on his relations with the young men from the English College. It was for them and for the Germans that he chiefly laboured, as he points out himself in a note prefixed to the first volume of the Controversies :

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[1] In those hardy times no Jesuits except the lay-brothers were provided with breakfasts.

When Pope Gregory XIII, of blessed memory, in his zeal to assist Germany and England established two great colleges for the young men of those countries, I was appointed to teach them controversial theology in our schools, and thus, as it were, to arm these new soldiers of the Church for the war with the powers of darkness which they should have to wage when they returned home.

It was before Bellarmine and two others that the English students made, on 25 April 1579, their heroic vow of returning to their country to labour and, if needs be, die, for its salvation. 'Mr. Sherwin, who was then a priest and student of divinity, was the first to declare his sentiments. With his hands on the Holy Scriptures, he took an oath that he was ready at a sign of his superiors to go, and that, rather to-day than to-morrow, for the good of souls.'[1]

Besides Blessed Ralph Sherwin, Blessed Luke Kirby and Blessed William Hart were also present at that parade before battle, and in addition to them, Bellarmine numbered among his friends and pupils the venerable martyrs John Lowe, Christopher Buxton, Edward James, Edmund Duke, John Ingram, John Cornelius, Henry Walpole, Robert Southwell, and Edward Oldcorne.[2] Indeed, he might have been himself an English martyr had he been given his way, for it is on record that 'he volunteered to go to England to lecture openly against the heretics.'[3] However, the chances of such a brave offer being accepted were very remote if we may judge by the Salmeron incident, which took place at this time. That distinguished companion of St. Ignatius and theologian of Trent was living in retirement at Naples. When invited by the General of the Jesuits to publish his works he agreed to do so, but being extremely old expressed a wish to have some learned Father as an assistant in the undertaking. The General, Everard Mercurian, immediately thought of Bellarmine, whereupon a strange thing happened. No sooner did his Paternity set about making the necessary arrangements than peremptory orders arrived from the Pope that Bellarmine was on no account to leave Rome. Being an invaluable man had its drawbacks, for Cardinal Santa Severina, the Grand Inquisitor, who was a warm admirer of Father Robert and had made great use of him in the complex and delicate business of his exalted office, had succeeded in persuading the Pope to issue a veto against the proposed departure from Rome.[1] That meant that Robert was virtually a prisoner and though, as Mercurian wrote to Salmeron, the Holy Father had been implored most earnestly—*con ogni caldezza*—to withdraw his prohibition, prisoner he remained for nearly a year.[2]

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[1] MS. of Father Thorpe in the Stonyhurst Archives.

[2] Foley, *Records of the English Province of the Society of Jesus*, vol. VI, p. 130. Diary of the English College, Rome.

[3] Le Bachelet, *Bellarmin avant son Cardinalat*, p. 130, n. 1.

When at last set free, he repaired at once to Naples, and spent the summer of 1579 there, carefully reading through an allotted portion of Salmeron's endless commentaries on the New Testament. It was not pleasant work, verifying thousands of references in the blaze of a Neapolitan sun, nor could anyone call it a holiday task, to have to point out his mistakes to a venerable but somewhat touchy old man. The first time Bellarmine appeared with his budget of errata he received a very cold welcome indeed, but that did not deter him. He had not come all the way from Rome to waste his breath praising what it would have been an impertinence for him to praise, so next morning he returned boldly with another long list of mistakes. This time the humble-hearted old man did not try to defend them, but accepted all his young censor's suggestions, and that was the beginning of a charming friendship between those two so far apart in years and so near to one another in true simplicity of heart.[3]

3. On August 28 Father Mercurian wrote asking Robert to come back soon. The students, he said, who loved his lectures, would be very distressed if he were not in his place on the day when schools began. He must, then, try to 'get round' Father Salmeron and obtain his leave to return to Rome, where, adds the General, 'we await you *con desiderio*.'[4] His wonderful lectures began again then, but though they must have been heavy work, they were far from being the only work which he had to do. We are not fortunate enough to possess any complete account of his subsidiary occupations, but we know that he was 'professor of eloquence' to the Jesuit scholastics, that he preached often, as of old, and that on one occasion, at least, he was chosen to deliver the Passion sermon on Good Friday before Pope Gregory and his Court.[5]

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[1] 'Cardinal Santa Severina said to me several times that in our Society Bellarmine had no equal.' B. Giustiniani, *Summarium*, n. 29, par. 44.

[2] *Monumenta Historica Societatis Jesu.* Epp. Salmeronis II, p. 684.

[3] Bellarmine's part in the revision of Salmeron's great tomes is described in *Mon. Histor. S.J.*: Epp. Sal., vol. I, p. xxx.

[4] Le Bachelet, *Bellarmin avant son Cardinalat*, p. 109.

[5] In Mascardi's *Orationes habitae in Aede Sistina*, Neuberg, 1641.

In Rome, too, as at Louvain, it was he who gave the usual domestic exhortations to his brother Jesuits, and in addition to this he catechized the lay-brothers regularly. These simple instructions became afterwards the nucleus of his extraordinarily successful little primer on Christian doctrine.

'Nothing makes a man so selfish as work,' remarked Captain Brassbound in the play, and it is a very true remark except when applied to people like Bellarmine who are a law unto themselves. Both inside and outside his Order he was always helping someone or other, usually some harassed Cardinal. Thus from 1579 onwards, he was busy on a great edition of the works of St. Ambrose which Montalto, the future brusque and mighty Pope Sixtus V, had undertaken. A great deal of his time was spent in doing people similar good turns, or in the case of humbler suppliants, in obtaining for them small favours on which they had set their hearts. One man wants the loan of a much-prized manuscript, another would be grateful if he would kindly obtain expert opinion for him on a point of applied mathematics. It was not surprising that he received so many appeals, because his way of answering them made it seem as if he counted it a favour to be asked. He never complained of having too much to do, but once in a very short letter to his brother Nicholas, begging him earnestly to see to the comfort of some Fathers who were going to Montepulciano, he ended with a plea to be forgiven the brevity because he was '*occupatissimo*,' or as busy as could be.[1] It does not require much reflection to be convinced that such must indeed have been the case.

Controversy of the kind to which he was devoted is not a fine art like the writing of poems or philosophies. These may be wrought out in fair independence of the hurly-burly beyond one's garden wall, but the first need of a controversialist is to know what the other side is saying. To discover that, in Bellarmine's day, when there were no newspapers nor theological journals, meant struggling through a wilderness of arid tomes such as no modern man would have the courage to read. Then, too, these tomes were often very difficult to procure. Booksellers' catalogues had not yet been thought of, and there were hardly any booksellers as distinct from printers. If one wished to see the latest literature on any particular subject, the only way was to go, or get somebody else to go, to the half-yearly bookfair at Frankfurt. Public libraries, as we know them now, did not exist, though, owing to the scholarly zeal of Marcello Cervini, students were permitted to make use of the Vatican's treasures.[1] In Rome, for obvious reasons, it was particularly difficult to obtain possession of heretical books. Montaigne, who visited the city at this time, bears eloquent testimony to the vigilance of the officers of the Inquisition, but it is unnecessary to quote him as there is a letter of Father Claudius Aquaviva, Mercurian's successor as General of the Jesuits, which is directly concerned with the matter. He writes to the Vice-Provincial of Naples in August 1586, asking him to send Bellarmine a copy of the latest edition of Beza's New Testament. If the book be too big to be carried by some Father of the Society *en route* for Rome, then the Vice-Provincial must devise an alternative means of getting it through, taking care to have it well-packed between boards, sealed, and addressed to Bellarmine himself. These precautions are necessary, the General says, 'to prevent trouble should the volume fall into the hands of the customs-officers of the Inquisition.'[2]

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[1] Le Bachelet, *Bellarmin avant son Cardinalat*, p. 129.

Remembering these initial difficulties we are in a better position to understand what his studies in heresy must have cost this 'vir lectionis stupendae,' as a famous Anglican Bishop styled Blessed Robert. There was hardly a single contemporary or recent heretic of any note whose writings he did not know thoroughly, as a glance through the pages of his Controversies proves. A reader might even be tempted to think that he must have enjoyed studying their lucubrations, they are cited so often and so fairly. But the truth escaped, on one occasion, in a letter to James Gretser who was himself engaged in lively skirmishes with the enemy. 'I thoroughly understand your Reverence's weariness of controversy,' Bellarmine wrote. 'I used to grow weary myself to the point of impatience, when answering the silly little objections of Chemnitz.'[3] He seems to have had an immense love for books, which is an infirmity of every scholarly mind, but it was a well-ordered love which took them for the tools they were, and not for things to be possessed on their own account. Like the other tangible goods of life, he knew that they came within the scope of his vow of poverty and so he made it his rule to keep by him only those few volumes of which he had immediate and pressing need. The following passage from his exhortations shows what he thought about the acquisitive spirit of some of his acquaintances:

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[1] Of his visit to the Vatican in 1581 Montaigne wrote : 'I inspected the Library without any difficulty ; indeed any one may visit it and make what extracts he likes. It is open almost every morning.' *Travels in Italy*, Eng. tr. vol. II, p. 120.

[2] Le Bachelet, *Bellarmin avant son Cardinalat*, pp. 144–145.

[3] *Epistolae familiares*, liv, p. 127.

> Certain people want a whole roomful of books, on the pretence that they need them all urgently from day to day. But if that were true, our friends would never be able to eat a meal or have half an hour's sleep, since their books are so numerous that an entire day would hardly be sufficient to open their covers, much less read them. As a matter of fact, they have many books which they dip into only very rarely, and many others which they never read at all. Why, then, do they want to keep them? It is because the concupiscence of the eyes makes them unhappy unless their rooms are full of things, and because the concupiscence of the flesh makes them too lazy to take the trouble of going to the library, and because the pride of life makes them want to pass for philosophers.[1]

Day by day the fame of the controversial lectures grew and spread, not only throughout Rome but in England, Germany, and Poland. The King of this latter country strove very eagerly in 1584 to acquire their author for service in Warsaw. He wanted him, the Apostolic nuncio wrote, 'by hook or by crook,' and when told that Bellarmine was indispensable in Rome as being a *gran valent' huomo*, answered sharply: 'It is precisely because he is a *gran valent' huomo* that I am asking for him.'[2] Two years earlier, Robert Persons at Rouen was looking about anxiously for a suitable priest to act as Italian tutor to the young King James of Scotland. He had to be a very highly accomplished man, because otherwise, in Persons' opinion, 'he would do more harm than good.' 'Those concerned will expect much greater things from you Italians than from us Englishmen,' he wrote to the General of the Jesuits. 'If Father Achilles would come, he would suit admirably, I think. I have not the courage to ask you for Father Bellarmine. . . .'[3] In Germany, also, there seem to have been timid hopes that the 'hammer of heretics' might one day come to do battle with them on their native heath. But such hopes were vain, as the authorities in Rome had already learned to value him too well.

His lectures were held in such esteem throughout the

[1] *Exhortationes Domesticae*, pp. 96–97.

[2] Le Bachelet, *Bellarmin avant son Cardinalat*, pp. 139–140.

[3] Le Bachelet, *l.c.*, p. 130.

city that bishops and learned prelates used to engage shorthand writers to report them. At length he began to be inundated with requests for their publication, and some enthusiasts even went so far as to threaten that if he did not soon comply they would take the law into their own hands. The General of the Jesuits, too, showed himself very keen, and so indeed did everybody except the man most concerned. He seems to have been genuinely astonished that people should have rated his work so highly, and there was a big dash of scepticism in the astonishment. Besides, he understood as others could not, what preparing such a work for the press would mean. A great deal of time would be necessary in the first place, and in this matter he was a penniless mendicant who rarely got so much as half an hour in alms.

Whenever a learned commission was appointed, or learned investigations were set on foot, Father Bellarmine was sure to be found in the thick of them. Thus prior to 1581, he devoted much time and attention to questions bearing on the reform of the calendar, and after that date to more delicate ones on the reform of the Breviary. At the same time he was one of a board charged by the Pope with the wearisome task of revising a large collection of rabbinical writings, and a few years later another board claimed him, this time for the more congenial business of preparing a new edition of the Septuagint. There were grave politico-religious questions too, such as those of the ‘Sicilian Monarchy,’ and the excommunication of Henry of Navarre, which kept his pen busy in defence of Papal action. On the Sicilian question, a burning one down to the days of Pius IX, he wrote an admirable little treatise for the benefit of the Viceroy of the province, Mark Antony Colonna, nephew of the celebrated Vittoria Colonna. Bellarmine was very devoted to the Colonna family, and particularly to Mark Antony who some years previously had been accorded a public triumph in Rome for his valour at the Battle of Lepanto. Since the days of the Norman Conquest there had been trouble in the two Sicilies because its kings, and afterwards the kings of Aragon, claimed full ecclesiastical authority there, to the exclusion of all Papal interference. Bellarmine wrote, he said, ‘because of the love he bore Mark Antony, and the fear he had lest God should send some terrible calamity on him and his house on account of the Sicilian Monarchy.’[1] His courageous charity does not seem to have availed much.

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[1] Le Bachelet, *Bellarmin avant son Cardinalat*, pp. 132–138.

Perhaps it even lost him the friendship of that powerful family, for during the conclave in which Paul V was elected we read of a Colonna intrigue to keep the Jesuit Cardinal out of the Papacy.[1] However, to be kept out was just what he wanted.

The worst intruders on his scanty leisure in those years of feverish activity were not Popes and prelates, but his own dearly beloved brethren of the Society of Jesus. Whenever they discovered a Protestant book which seemed to be causing more harm than usual, they had a convenient little habit of sending the troublesome thing to Rome for refutation, instead of sitting down and doing the work themselves. Thus in 1584 Bellarmine was burdened with the answering of a long-winded Lutheran essay which endeavoured to prove to the German people that the Holy Roman Empire, of which they were the inheritors, had come to them quite independently of any Papal concession. It was a tedious question to have to read up, but Father Robert was nothing if not thorough, and his rejoinder occupies nearly a hundred double-column pages in Fèvre's edition of his works (Paris 1873, vol. VI).

The dissertation was divided into three sections, one 'On the Transference of the Empire from the Greeks to the Franks'; another 'On the Transference of that Empire from the Family of Charlemagne to the Saxons'; and the third, 'On the Seven Electors.' Its importance came from the fact that the German princes, fortified with the arguments of Illyricus, were beginning to snap their fingers at the Holy See. If they did not owe their privileges to the Pope, why should they pay him any deference? Bellarmine's manuscript was read by Gregory XIII and his prime minister. Then it was passed on to Cardinal Sirleto, the protector of the German College, who said it was the best thing he had ever seen on the subject. Nevertheless, he advised against publication, fearing the hubbub that would be sure to arise in Germany. Sirleto was a man of great influence, so his opinion prevailed for a time, but there was a party headed by Father Possevino, the original suppliant, who did not agree with him and his cautious counsellors. Between them, these opportunists and inopportunists nearly worried the life out of poor Father Bellarmine.[2]

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[1] Le Bachelet, *Bellarmin avant son Cardinalat*, p. 138, n. 4.

[2] This treatise was subsequently subjected to very severe criticism by men who were better scholars than Bellarmine. It has no value at the present day, except as an illustration of historical methods that have been superseded.

His lively criticism of the famous Lutheran 'Book of Concord' had a similar origin. Someone sent it to him in 1585, and received back a long review in which 'six grave blunders and sixty-seven lies' were dealt with as they deserved. He did not intend this document to be published, but the good man to whom he sent it took it at once with a joyful whoop to the printers. On its appearance, the whole theological faculty of Wittemburg banded together to give it the *coup de grâce*. 'But I hear,' wrote its author several years later, 'that it is still alive and has not lost a drop of blood.'

There was another reason too, besides lack of time, which must have made the editing of his lectures seem to him an impossible task. He gives it in a paragragh of his long letter to Salmeron of 19 July 1584:

> I had planned to lecture on the Sacraments during the coming year, or rather to begin my treatment of them, as I shall not get through the matter in a year, but I am doubtful now whether I shall be able to carry out my programme. Last Whitsuntide, a disease of the nerves attacked me in the head and right arm, and caused me the most dreadful pain I have ever experienced. For some days I was unable to make the slightest movement in bed, and could not obtain a wink of sleep, even with the aid of opiates. Several remedies were tried, such as the removal of much blood from my arms, feet, and shoulders, and ointments and fomentations of many kinds. As a result of these the spasms passed away, but I have not yet recovered the use of my arm. The physicians were thinking of performing a cautery on my neck to remedy this trouble but, in order to spare me the nuisance of sticking-plaster and bandages, they operated on my left arm instead. They have come to the conclusion that the attack was due to over-study, so if I do not make a good recovery I may be prevented from pursuing my course next year. At present, I am in banishment at Frascati, and not reading very much. Please forgive me, Father, if I have wearied you with this long letter, and remember me in your holy prayers and sacrifices.[1]

The Cretan Jesuit, Andrew Eudaemon-Joannes, who was one of Bellarmine's closest friends, relates that when the agony was greatest and the poor sufferer was exhorted by those in attendance on him to pray to God for deliverance, he would not do so, saying that though he knew for certain he would be heard, he did not know whether such a favour would be good for his soul.[2]

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[1] Le Bachelet, *Bellarmin avant son Cardinalat*, pp. 143–144.

[2] *Summarium*, n. 29, par. 11.

From what has been already seen of his character it might be guessed that illness or no illness he would soon be at work once more. And so it happened. The lectures on the Sacraments began according to programme and, in addition, he settled down in real earnest to the gigantic task of preparing his manuscript for the press. It was not by his own will, he said, that he undertook the work, but at the command of his superiors, and because he hoped that it might prove of temporary service until some better scholar wrote a better book. Every one of the two million words which it contained when complete, was written out by the right arm that had suffered so much and been so roughly used by the doctors. This we know on the authority of the witness last quoted, who himself saw the copies. Even to-day, with all our modern conveniences, the making of a learned book is not the most agreeable of occupations ; in Bellarmine's time, if we are to believe his contemporary Casaubon, it was nothing less than a prolonged martyrdom, a thing of 'blood and sweat and groans and sighs.' The Diary of that famous doctor is a dismal litany bewailing the miseries of a writer's life, the intrusions of people who were 'no true scholars,' and printers' iniquities. *Non te fugit quid sit libros edere*, he wrote feelingly to his friend de Thou—you know what getting a book through the press involves. Bellarmine knew too, but unlike Casaubon, he believed in keeping the knowledge to himself and not bothering the world with his woes. All he says is : 'If I am not mistaken, it was in the year 1584 that N. began to write and publish books, first his Hebrew grammar, then the work on the transference of the Roman imperial authority from the Greeks to the Germans against Illyricus, and later the first volume of his Controversies.' [1]

The first volume was issued in 1586 from the press of David Sartorius of Ingolstadt, and bore diplomas from Pope Sixtus V, the Emperor Rudolph II, and the Republic of Venice. It was dedicated to the Pope, who, in return for the honour, sent its author a generous gift of four hundred gold pieces. Seven treatises were contained in the huge folio, on Scripture and Tradition; on Christ the Head of the entire Church; on the Pope the head of the Church on earth; on Councils and the nature of the Church in general; on the members of the Church militant, clergy, religious, and laymen; on the Church suffering in Purgatory; and on the Church triumphant in Heaven. As an indication of the fullness of treatment accorded to each of these subjects, it may be said that the single controversy on the Pope would make a very substantial modern book, if printed separately. The second volume, containing the lectures on the Sacraments, appeared in 1588 or within a little over a year after their first delivery. In it 259 ecclesiastical writers are cited textually, as well as 59 historians, philosophers, and humanists. These quotations are practically all first hand, that is, they were selected from their context by Bellarmine himself. He was not content merely to appropriate the happy findings of other explorers, nor was he satisfied with putting his own findings down in a row and leaving them, as some modern doctors do. He proceeded to explain them, to show how they fitted in with and threw light on other more recalcitrant texts, and finally, to bring out the real strength of their witness to Catholic belief. Five years were to elapse before the appearance of his last volume containing the three great treatises on grace and justification. This long delay was due to a variety of strange adventures which the succeeding chapters will unfold.

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[1] *Autobiography*, n. xxiv. Lest anyone should think that the comparison with Casaubon is unfair, as that scholar had not a powerful Society at his back, it should be remembered that the Society had nothing to do with the publication of the Controversies except to censor them, and that was an inconvenience which Casaubon was spared. Bellarmine had far greater difficulties with printers than the Calvinist doctor, and ten times as many visitors to bother him. Besides, Dr. Isaac is not known to have spent five or six hours of his day in prayer.

4. Wise and holy men have often said hard things about learning, Thomas à Kempis, in particular, being a great denouncer of its vanity. His attitude was summed up in the familiar contemptuous line: ‘I had rather feel compunction than know its definition,’ and it was the attitude of a man who possessed an almost miraculous power of psychological discernment. It is not easy to be a great lover and a learned man, otherwise the scholar-saints in the calendar would not be such a tiny company compared with the huge army which no man can number of virgins, martyrs, and confessors, whose only book was their crucifix. The controversy between the human head and the human heart dates from the Fall, and only the most skilled of spiritual diplomatists can restore their full harmony. It is easy enough to throw oneself into work, and it is not impossible to throw oneself into prayer, but to throw the prayer into the work with vigour and persistence is an adjustment that calls for the rarest kind of courage. The attractiveness of Blessed Robert Bellarmine's story lies pre-

cisely here. Without instituting comparisons which his beloved à Kempis deprecated, it might fairly be said that there were many saints more illustrious for virtues and miracles than he, and not a few more learned men, but how rare the artists in great living who, like him, combined the two things perfectly, both feeling compunction *and* knowing its definition.[1] He was a great scholar by the standards of his age, and a saint by the standards of Heaven. The three volumes of his Controversies were his three vows bound in buckram, because it was the love in his heart for these things that begot the other things in his intellect. We may study now, very briefly, how that love showed itself when challenged by his life's circumstances.

In 1588, the Society to which he belonged was passing through one of the worst crises of its chequered history, for Pope Sixtus V seemed bent on changing its constitutions and its name. In the thick of the trouble one of its own sons turned traitor. Julian Vincent, an eccentric priest of the College of Bordeaux, had for various reasons conceived a grudge against his superiors. He wrote a preposterous paper in which the General of the Jesuits was declared to be infallible, and then, coming to Rome without any leave, he persuaded a simple-minded old father to sign the document. No sooner was this done than the mean fellow denounced his dupe to the Inquisition, and backed up the charge with an elaborate attack on the Jesuit doctrine of obedience. The accused man, notwithstanding his age, was thrown into prison, and the Pope himself did not disdain to take part in the judicial proceedings. He even cross-questioned Father Aquaviva, who was in sore straits with enemies on every side. At the darkest hour, suddenly a brilliant thought came to the harassed General's mind—Bellarmine! He would give his Society's enemies a taste of Bellarmine! Blessed Robert answered the call with alacrity, and wrote a treatise 'On the Obedience which is called Blind', wherein Vincent and his friends were duly and decently annihilated.

No better defence of the third vow of religion was ever written, and few of Bellarmine's innumerable pages are so finely reasoned, incisive, and victorious. It could not have been otherwise, because the enthusiasm of a life's convictions went to their making. After extolling the virtue itself, and tearing Vincent's travesty of it to pieces, he went on to show that it implied no irresponsible right to command, that it was the necessary attitude of all good Christians in face of any precept of the Church, that it was plainly commended in the Scriptures and the writings of the Fathers, of whom he quoted fourteen passages, that it was taught by all masters of the religious life, and that the similes of a corpse and a staff, which offended many people's sensibilities, were not the original invention of St. Ignatius, but borrowed by him from St. Basil and St. Francis of Assisi. Just as, when a boy, Robert had come to the rescue of his school, so, when a man, he played a brave and brilliant part in the saving of his Order. The imprisoned father was released, and the unfortunate Vincent, who ended up with an attack on the Pope, would have lost his head by the sword if he had not already lost it by lunacy. Bellarmine had foreseen what was coming and, alluding to the savage taunts of his antagonist, remarked that the poor fellow obviously 'needed hellebore much more than a refutation.'[1]

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[1] He wrote an entire book on the subject, *De Gemitu Columbae sive de bono lachrymarum*, Rome and Antwerp, 1617, pp. 346.

Those who lived with Blessed Robert in Rome tell us that he went to almost extravagant lengths in his love for the vow of poverty. Here indeed St. Francis marked him for his very own. He would not keep in his possession as much as a holy picture nor a blessed medal, except the one attached to his rosary beads. At the Roman College they used to have a kind of 'clearance day' periodically, when all the fathers and brothers were invited to deliver up whatever superfluous goods they discovered in their rooms. Bellarmine usually had nothing to declare, but on one occasion he came with a little relic given him by some friend, and for which he had obtained leave. The Rector, who obviously knew that the trifle was dear to its possessor on account of its associations, tried to persuade him to keep it. However, it was not a 'necessity of life' and that ended the argument. Similarly when kind people strove to get him to accept small presents by urging (as they still urge!) that he would find them useful as gifts for children or his brother Jesuits at Christmas time, his smiling answer was always the same: 'Caro mio, a poor man ought not to have anything to give away.'[2] Even the manuscripts of his own compositions which he kept in his room worried him, and he used to envy the unlettered lay-brothers who were privileged to be without such encumbrances.[1]

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[1] The defence of the Jesuit doctrine of obedience is given by Le Bachelet, *Auctarium Bellarminianum*, pp. 377–403.

[2] Fuligatti, *Vita*, p. 89. Cf. *Exhortationes Domesticae*, p. 221: 'At inquiunt, pudet me non posse dare petentibus res devotionis, sed potius deberent pudere habere ad dandum.'

Professors, in our day, are not expected to be scullions as well, but Bellarmine, it appears, used to fill that rôle. Father Thomas Sailly, the distinguished Belgian priest already mentioned in connection with the Louvain sermons, went on to Rome in 1580 to study under the direction of his hero. ‘I observed in him,’ he records, ‘deep humility joined to rare learning, learning so great that bishops and prelates used to employ reporters to take down what he said. When I was engaged with him in the service of the kitchen, and in washing and drying dishes, he did all this lowly work as energetically, carefully, and exactly as if it were the big business of theology that occupied him, and never a word did he speak nor once look round.’[2] This silence and absorption over the dishes did not come from melancholy or the abstract moods of a philosopher, because at the right time there was none so merry as Father Robert. Indeed he was famous in the community for his wit. One who lived many years in his company says that cheerfulness was the chief note of his conversation—‘*una santa allegressa*’—and that he made capital puns.[3] Pun-making, indeed, was a weakness that clung to him until his dying day, an amiable little Tuscan imp which he never took the slightest pains to exorcize.

Another trait which his friends noticed was his reverence for every man with whom he dealt, no matter how much of a nobody the man might be. Washing dishes is no infallible sign of humility, but deference to the opinions of other people certainly is. When the Controversies were in course of printing at Ingolstadt, the Jesuit Fathers of that city took it upon themselves to ‘improve’ the text in certain details, without saying a word to the author. He showed not the slightest resentment, but rather expressed his delight that the work had thus been made more serviceable to Protestants.[4] His great friend Eudaemon-Joannes noticed how carefully all the censors’ suggestions had been copied into his manuscripts.

> When I had to revise any of his books [says the same Father] I used to be amazed at the humility with which he handed them over

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[1] Mutius Vitelleschi in *Summarium*, n. 19, par. 7.

[2] *Annuaire de l’Université de Louvain*, 1841, p. 169.

[3] Benedetto Giustiniani in *Summarium*, n. 29, par. 44.

[4] *Summarium*, n. 29, par. 44.

to me. I have still by me a note in his hand which runs as follows: 'To the Reverend Father Eudaemon-Joannes, begging him to look over this manuscript and to decide whether it deserves to see the light or to remain in obscurity.' And this was not said out of mere ceremony, for after I had been through the work he used to ask me again with the greatest earnestness to tell him the unvarnished truth. Speak out boldly, he would say, as a brother ought to a brother. Nor did he care in the least to know if his work would make a great noise in the world, but only whether it would do good. This was all he ever asked. He was most exact in noting any suggestions his advisers had to offer, however unimportant they might be, and if he disagreed with anyone, he always let him know. On one occasion he sent me a note saying that he had found some matter in St. Thomas to be just the reverse of what I had found there. A little later he saw that he was wrong and that I was right, so what should he do but straightway come along in person to tell me that the victory was mine. That was always his way, not only with regard to his writings, but in cases of conscience and grave questions of theology. He used not only to ask advice, but to take it most readily, even though before he had held the opposite view. Indeed, many a time he made me feel quite ashamed, so like a school-boy was he dealing with his master.[1]

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[1] *Summarium*, n. 29, par. 20. Similar evidence was given by other men who knew him.

CHAPTER VIII

GOOD REPORT AND EVIL REPORT

1. One way among others of estimating the historical importance of a book or theory is to notice how the world welcomes it. Admiration and hate are both good witnesses to the power of the object that provokes them, and so, without ever looking inside Bellarmine's majestic tomes, we may gain some notion of their greatness if we will but observe the excitement caused by their publication. The bugles of Protestantism immediately sounded the alarm. A new style of enemy was in the gate, one equipped, it was reported, as never a Roman before. In 1588, the greatest of the Elizabethan theologians, William Whitaker, was Master of St. John's College and Regius Professor of Divinity in the University of Cambridge, then as now a stronghold of the Reformation. His 'Disputation on Holy Scripture Against the Papists Especially Bellarmine and Stapleton' appeared that year, with an epistle dedicatory 'To the most noble William Cecil, Baron Burghley, High Treasurer of England.' This epistle is interesting enough to be quoted at some length :

> There have been many heretofore, illustrious Cecil, who have defended the papal interest and sovereignty with the utmost exertion, the keenest zeal, and no mean or vulgar erudition. But they who have played their part with most address, and far outstripped almost all others of their own side, are those men who now, for some years back, have been engaged most earnestly in this Cause ; a fresh supply of monks, subtle theologians, vehement and formidable controvertists ; whom that strange—and in former times unheard of—Society of Jesus hath brought forth, for the calamity of the Church and the Christian religion. For when, after that black, deadly, baneful, and tedious night of popish superstition and antichristianism, the clear and cheerful lustre of the Gospel had illuminated with its rays some portions of the christian world . . . on a sudden these men sprang up to obscure with pestilential vapours and ravish, if possible, from our view, this light, so hateful to themselves, so hostile and prejudicial to their interests. So

indeed had John, that holy disciple of Christ, predicted in the Apocalypse. . . . This pit [of Rome] from the time it was first opened, hath not ceased to exhale perpetual smoke to blind the eyes of men, and hath sent forth innumerable locusts upon the earth, like scorpions, who have wounded with their deadly stings all men upon whose foreheads the Seal of God was not impressed. . . . Amongst these locusts—that is, as very learned men justly deem, amongst the innumerable troops of monks—none, as we before said, have ever appeared more keen or better prepared and equipped for doing mischief than are the Jesuits at this present day ; who in a short space have surpassed all other societies of that kind in numbers, in credit and in audacity. . . . Amongst these Jesuits, Robert Bellarmine, a native of Italy, hath now for several years obtained a great and celebrated name. At first he taught scholastic divinity in Belgium, but afterwards, having removed to Rome, he treated of theological controversies in such a manner as to excite the admiration and gain the applause of all. His lectures were eagerly listened to by his auditors, transcribed, transmitted into every quarter and treasured up as jewels and amulets. After some time, for the sake of rendering them more generally useful, they were epitomized by a certain Englishman. Finally the first volume of these Controversies hath been published at Ingolstadt, printed by Sartorius, and the rest are expected in due time. . . . When you, honoured Sir, demanded my opinion of the writer, I answered, as indeed I thought, that I deemed him to be a man unquestionably learned, possessed of a happy genius, a penetrating judgment and multifarious reading. . . . Now that Bellarmine hath been published, we shall know better and more certainly what it is [our adversaries] hold upon every subject, the arguments on which they specially rely, and what is, so to speak, the very marrow of popery, which is thought to be as much in the Jesuits as in the Pope himself. Knowing therefore how much our party desire that these Jesuits should be answered, and having fallen in with a manuscript copy of Bellarmine's lectures, I thought it worth my while to handle these same controversies in the schools in the discharge of the duties of my office, to discuss the new sophisms of the Jesuits and vindicate our unadulterated truth from the captious cavils with which the popish professor hath entangled it.[1]

The address which Dr. Whitaker delivered before the Cambridge undergraduates at the commencement of his course was couched in similar terms. 'The Papists,' he said, 'have two professors in two of their colleges, Stapleton at Douay and Allen at Rheims, both countrymen of ours (besides other doctors in other academies) who have explained many controversies and published books. . . . But beyond them all, in the largeness wherewith he hath treated these controversies is Robert Bellarmine, the Jesuit, at Rome, whose lectures are passed from hand to hand and diligently transcribed and read by very many. . . . Since Bellarmine hath handled these questions with accuracy and method, we will make him, so to speak, our principal aim, and follow, as it were, his very footsteps.' That the learned doctor kept faithfully to his plan is evident from the mere titles of his books. The regularity with which these came from his pen, coupled with the fact that he was the father of a large family, gave rise to a saying *quod mundo quotannis librum et liberum dedit*—that he presented the world with a book and a baby every year. Bellarmine's work had its purpose inscribed on the front page, '*adversus hujus temporis haereticos*' and Whitaker, copying the caption, advertised his answers as being '*contra hujus temporis papistas*.' But he was a precise person, and so added to his titles the significant words: '*imprimis Robertum Bellarminum, Jesuitam.*' That little codicil was to become very popular in the anti-Catholic literature of those spacious times, for nearly every Protestant doctor of any consequence, who wrote against the Church, flourished it on his front page.

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[1] *Disputatio de Sacra Scriptura.* Epistle Dedicatory. Parker Society's edition, Cambridge, 1849.

If we may trust the evidence of a witness cited in the process of Bellarmine's beatification, the sleepy little town on the Cam would seem to have cared much more for him than for his humourless and crusty assailant, Whitaker. 'During my student days at Cambridge, England's foremost University,' says this man, 'I remember well the fame which Bellarmine enjoyed among the undergraduates. When we wanted to know how any clerical don had succeeded with his sermon, we used to ask whether he had launched forth against Bellarmine. If told that he had, we knew without further inquiry that the sermon must have been a fiasco. Several preachers of the University, whose names I could give, had made themselves a standing joke among us, for the simple reason that they had rashly ventured to grapple with Bellarmine.'[1]

The Oxford dons do not seem to have been quite so brisk in giving battle as their Cambridge brethren, but they showed no less zeal when at length aroused. Whitaker's counterpart among them was a certain Dr. John Reynolds, about whom

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[1] *Summarium additionale*, n. 6, par. 8. The witness's name is given as that of Thomas Stapleton, but this must be an oversight as there is no evidence that Stapleton was ever at Cambridge.

Fuller tells a good though decidedly improbable story. Dr. John's brother, William, was a zealous Catholic, and a professor at Rheims. According to Fuller, in early life it was the other way about, John being a zealous Papist and William an earnest Protestant. They had a great argument on religion one day and 'providence so ordered it,' says our historian, 'that by their mutual disputation, John Reynolds turned an eminent Protestant and William an inveterate Papist.'[1] John, who had a clever, ambitious head, and later initiated the project of the Authorized Version, was appointed in 1586 to a temporary lectureship at Oxford, founded by Sir Francis Walsingham 'for the confutation of Roman tenets.' 'He read this lecture,' says Anthony Wood, 'in the Divinity School thrice a week in full term, had constantly a great auditory, and was held by those of his party to have done great good.'[2] Whether or no it was part of his mandate, Dr. John occupied himself almost exclusively with Bellarmine. The first of his books against him appeared in 1596, but not till fifteen years later did his complete course of two hundred and fifty Oxford Lectures *adversus Pontificios, imprimis Bellarminum* see the light. In addition to Reynolds, Wood relates that Richard Field, of Magdalene Hall, Oxford, 'was for seven years together, every Sunday, a discusser of controversies against Bellarmine, before his fellow aularians.'[3] It was probably facts such as these which gave rise to the well-known story that Queen Elizabeth established chairs for the express purpose of refuting the Controversies.[4]

Though his influence was so strenuously resisted by deans and dons, the Cardinal's red-robed figure came to be regarded eventually in the genial atmosphere of the Universities, with something like playful affection. A collection of jests and anecdotes from Anthony Wood's papers was published at Oxford in 1751 under the title *Modius Salium*, or a Bushel of Wit. There Anthony relates that 'one of the Fellows of Exeter College, when Dr. Prideaux was Rector, sent his servitor after nine o'clock at night with a large bottle to fetch some ale from the ale-house. When he was coming home with it under his gown, the Proctor met him and asked him what he did out so late at night, and what he had under his gown. He answered that his master had sent him to the stationer's to borrow Bellarmine, which book he had under his arm, and so went home. Whence a bottle with a big belly is called a bellarmine to this day.' It is sad to have to discount this pleasant bit of etymology, but unfortunately the word 'bellarmine' in our dictionaries had a less agreeable origin. Towards the close of the fifteenth century, the town of Frechen, near Cologne, became a great centre of the pottery industry, and specialized in a type of round-bellied, narrow-necked jug, with a bearded mask on front. This feature caused the vessels to be nicknamed *Bartmänner*. At first the mask represented nobody in particular, but one fine day, some quick-witted potter began to think within himself how he might turn the hot debates on religion which were going on all round him to his private and personal gain. Bellarmine he knew to be the foe *par excellence* of all good Protestants, so he conceived the bright idea of making *him* the man on the jug. Great was his reward, for his Bellarmines or Greybeards leapt into immediate popularity and were exported in vast numbers to England, Scandinavia, and the Low Countries, with the delightful result that the tipsters of heretical Europe were to be found, soon after, pouring their ale or wine from the top of the hated Cardinal's head. It was a great joke, and rendered applicable to its victim an ancient prophetic text: 'The zeal of Thy House hath eaten me up. . . . They that drank wine made me their song.'

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[1] *Church History of England*, sub. an. 1607.

[2] *Athenae Oxonienses*, sub. nom.

[3] *Athenae*, first ed., II, p. 181.

[4] Cepari, a personal friend of Bellarmine, hints that this was so (*Summarium*, n. 11, par. 6), a hint that was not lost on Alegambus, the first bibliographer of the Society of Jesus. Bartoli, Frizon, Couderc, and all the other biographers reproduced Alegambus 'with additions.' No references are given by any of them, nor do the Calendar of State Papers, Strype, Camden, Wood, Cooper, etc., give any confirmation of the story.

A non-Catholic admirer of the great Catholic theologian protested in *Notes and Queries* against the above explanation of how bellarmines originated. 'Some other derivation should be found for the word,' he wrote. 'Cardinal Bellarmine, so far from being signalized by a capacious belly, was particularly noted for sobriety.'[1] But that was just the point of the joke, as a little study of the jugs reveals. It is perfectly plain that they were originally meant in mockery, as a kind of coarse retort to the Controversies, just as were, in another connection, the fantastic Kaisers and Hindenburgs which decorated some English earthenware during the Great War. As a household vessel the bellarmine is now obsolete, but that it once enjoyed much popularity in the taverns and stately

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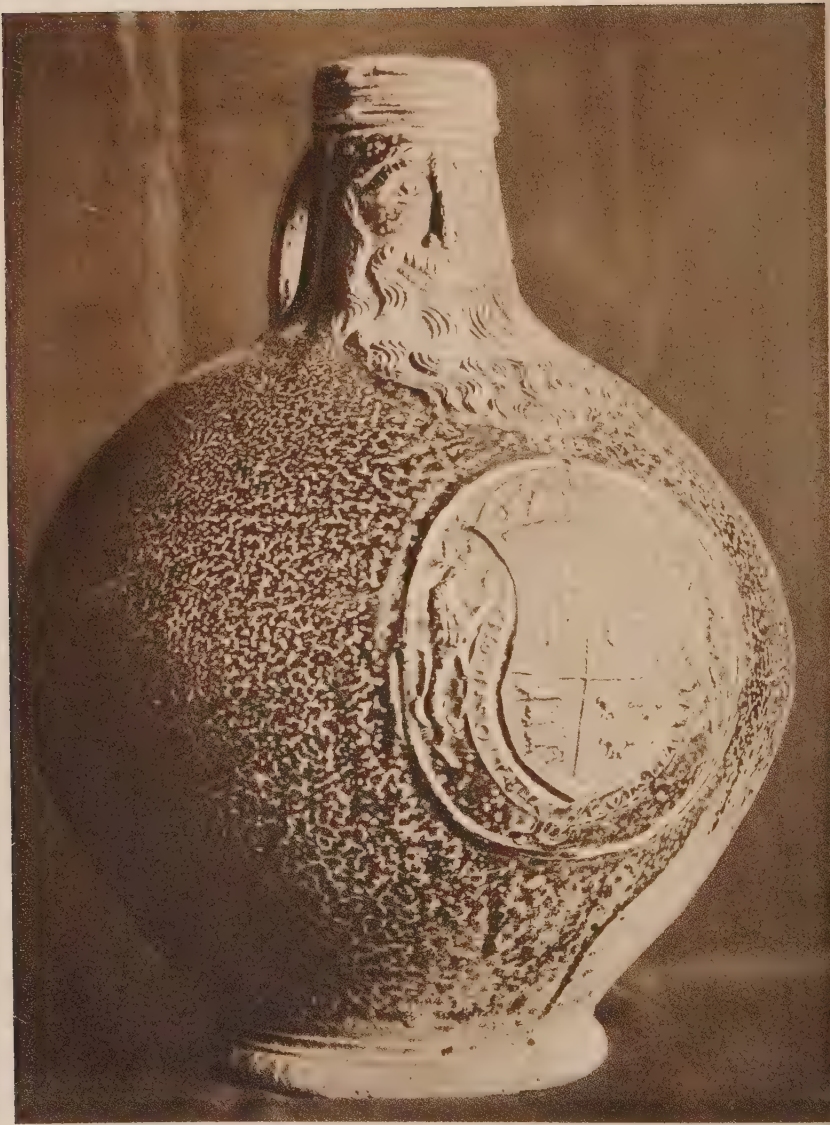
[1] *Notes and Queries*, Seventh Series, vol. 1, 24 April 1896.



A BELLARMINE JUG.

This specimen, which is in the London Museum, is fifteen inches high and inscribed 'E.R. 1590.' It was found in King William Street, City.

homes of England is evident from the many specimens which are to be found in museums and private collections up and down the country. The London Museum [1] alone possesses more than a hundred, nearly all dug up or discovered in the city and its suburbs. As a rule, they bear, in addition to the mask, a crest, either of the town in which they were made or of their private owners. The first and best specimens were good attempts at caricature, and the Cardinal is easily recognizable in them. But as time went on the features became conventional, and eventually passed into those of other worthies who happened to be popular or unpopular in their day. There are some references to the jug in the by-ways of English literature. A drunken brawler in Ben Jonson's disgusting *Bartholomew Fair* says to the policeman who is about to arrest one of his boon companions :

> ' Stay, Bristle, here ish anoder brash of drunkards, but very quiet, special drunkards, will pay de five shillings very well. Take 'em to de, in de graish o' God ; one of hem do's change cloth for ale in the Fair, here ; te toder ish a strong man, a mighty man, my lord mayor's man, and a wrastler. He has wrashled so long with the bottle here that the man with the beard hash almosh streek up hish heelsh.'[2]

From a curious book called *Oikographia*, published by Welsted in 1725, we gather that Queen Elizabeth, too, probably had a jug christened after her, though not in derision :

No bellarmine, my Lord, is here ;
Eliza none at hand to reach
A betty called in common speech.

The allusion in Cartwright's forgotten comedy, *The Ordinary*, is more interesting, for it seems to show that Dr. Matthew Sutcliffe's tirades against the Cardinal were not popular with the ' gods.' The comedy was acted several times in London prior to 1643.

Rimewell (to Catchmey, a Cathedral singing-man) :

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[1] It may be well to state for the benefit of readers who might like to examine the jugs, and are not familiar with London, that the London Museum is not the same as the British Museum, but a most interesting collection of relics of the city situated at a short distance up the Mall from Buckingham Palace.

[2] Act IV, Scene iv. *Bartholomew Fair* was acted in the presence of King James I in 1614. The ' man with the beard ' is, of course, Bellarmine.

Thou thing,
Thy belly looks like to some strutting hill,
O'ershadowed with thy rough beard like a wood.

Christopher (a curate):

Or like a larger jug that some men call
A Bellarmine, but we a conscience;
Whereon the lewder hand of pagan workman
Over the proud ambitious head hath carved
An idol large, with beard episcopal,
Making the vessel look like tyrant Eglon.

At this point in the play, three of the men have a serious quarrel, and to appease them, someone calls for beer and a song. Each takes a verse, the curate's doggerel being as follows:

First to breakfast, then to dine,
Is to conquer Bellarmine:
Distinctions then are budding.
  Old Sutcliffe's wit
  Did never hit
But after his bag-pudding.[1]

2. The best known of Blessed Robert's biographers, Père Couderc, says, after alluding to the success of the Controversies in England, that 'Queen Elizabeth could find no other remedy for the evil except by prohibiting the study of Bellarmine under penalty of death to all who were not doctors of theology, and there was the same punishment for those discovered in possession of his volumes.'[2] One might have thought that the lady who defied the armaments of Spain would not have been so terribly scared of a solitary Italian Jesuit. As a matter of fact, the Statute Book has no record of any such enactment, and the detailed histories of the time are equally silent about it. It is only a bit of biographical gossip, with this much foundation for it that Catholic books *in the vernacular* were forbidden. Stapleton, who would certainly have known, says that he had never heard of a law against Latin works.[3]

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[1] Dodwell's *Select Collection of Old Plays*, vol. x, pp. 212–214. Sutcliffe was one of the bitterest of Bellarmine's English opponents. Cf. *infra*, p. 149. It is curious that not one of the Cardinal's biographers should have mentioned the jugs, but this was probably because they were unknown in the Catholic parts of Europe where the biographies were written.

[2] J. B. Couderc, *Le Vénérable Cardinal Bellarmin*, t. I, pp. 125–126.

[3] *Stapletonii Opera*, Paris, 1620, vol. I, p. 1079.

Besides, the censorship was controlled, not by Parliament, but by the Archbishop of Canterbury and other members of the Privy Council, who sometimes made exceptions. Thus in October 1586, when Bellarmine's first volume was published, Whitgift granted the following interesting licence to an Italian resident in London, named Ascanio:

> Whereas sundry books are from time to time set forth in the parts beyond seas, by such as are addicted to the errors of Popery; yet in many respects expedient to be had by some of the learned of this realm: containing also oftentimes matter in them against the state of this land, and slanderous unto it; and therefore no fit books to pass through every man's hands freely: in consideration whereof, I have tolerated Ascanius de Renialme, merchant bookseller, to bring into this realm from the parts beyond seas some few copies of every such sort of books; upon this condition only, that any of them be not showed nor dispersed abroad, but first brought to me, or some other of her Majesty's Privy Council, that so they may be delivered or directed to be delivered forth, unto such persons only, as by us, or some of us, shall be thought most meet men, upon good considerations and purposes, to have the reading and perusal of them. Given at Lambeth, October 1586, *anno reg. Regin. Elizab.* 28°.[1]

It may have been the Italian bookseller here mentioned who, according to another biographer, exclaimed one morning in the joy of his heart: 'This Jesuite Bellarmine alone has gotten me more gaine than all our divines and ministers together.'[2]

However much we may have to discount such piquant details, it is quite certain that Bellarmine's volumes became diffused in England with extraordinary rapidity. Nor was this only among academic people who might have had a professional interest in their refutation, as may be seen from what Isaac Walton reports about Donne, the famous Dean of St. Paul's. Donne, as is well known, belonged to an old Catholic family, and was the nephew of Father Jasper Heywood, the superior of the English Jesuits. Unfortunately the boy had a wild, passionate heart, which hungered after forbidden experience, and lost him his Christian faith. In his groping back to God, he seems to have persuaded himself that the Established Church would afford a better refuge for his harassed soul than the religion for which his ancestor, Sir Thomas

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[1] Strype, *The Life and Acts of John Whitgift, D.D.*, Oxford (1822 ed.), vol. 1, p. 513.

[2] Frizon, *La Vie du Card. Bellarmin*, Brussels, 1718, p. 102. Frizon gives no references.

More, had died so gallantly. In order to justify his desertion, he decided to embark on a long critical inquiry into Catholic doctrines, taking for his text, with a grand gesture of impartiality, the weightiest Catholic authorities he could find. 'He believed Bellarmine to be the best defender of the Roman cause,' says Isaac Walton, 'and therefore betook himself to an examination of his reasons. . . . About the twentieth year of his age, [he] did show the Dean of Gloucester all the Cardinal's works, marked with many weighty observations under his own hand, which works were bequeathed by him, at his death, as a legacy to a most dear friend.'[1] Donne kept his twentieth birthday in 1593, the year during which Sartorius of Ingolstadt completed the publication of the Controversies. If that was the edition which he used, it must have found its way to England immediately after issuing from the press. If, on the other hand, it was the Lyons edition of 1596, Walton's estimate of his young countryman's age when he began his inquiry, needs to be increased by a few years, but the main point of the story does not thereby lose much of its significance.[2] In either case the swiftness of Bellarmine's invasion is sufficiently astonishing to be worthy of remark.

Many famous men besides Donne took him for a text-book and whiled away their leisure in his company. One of these was Dr. Richard Montagu, whose appointment to the bishopric of Chichester by Charles I in 1628 nearly precipitated the Civil War at that date. He was a kind of early tractarian in his views, and consequently anathema to the Puritan party which was then beginning to take control of England's destinies. The narrow evangelical divines flooded the country with abusive tracts about him, in one of which he was described as 'an animal scarce rational, whose study is to read and applaud Peter Lambard (*sic*) and John Duns before Peter Martyr and John Calvin, and for more modern polemics he prefers Bellarmine before Chamierus.'[3] From his studies,

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[1] *The Life of Dr. John Donne*, ed. 1825, pp. 7–8.

[2] On Walton's dates, cf. *The Life of John Donne* by Sir Edmund Gosse, vol. 1, pp. 25–26.

[3] *Anti-Montacutum, an Appeale or Remonstrance of the Orthodox Ministers against Richard Mountague.* Edinburgh, 1629. The Chamierus referred to in the tract was Daniel Chamier, a leading light among the Huguenots. He worked for ten years at the refutation of Bellarmine, but found the task too heavy. A national synod of the French Huguenots then decided to divide the work among the various Calvinist provinces, but when the time for co-ordinating the manuscripts came, they were discovered to be so contradictory that the whole scheme had to be abandoned. Barbier, *La Ministrographie huguenote*, p. 181.

Bishop Montagu gained a very high opinion of Bellarmine's merits, and expressed it in the following striking terms :

> He was a man, I must say, of wonderful industry and learning, and his reading was stupendous. He was the first and only one to put his hand with amazing skill to that shapeless mass and huge chaos of controversies, to reduce its confusion to order, and to give it elegance. And all this was done carefully and accurately after years of study. Outdistancing every rival, he snatched away the palm and won for himself all the praise in the world. Those who treat of controversies in our day borrow practically all their material from his stores, as the poets do from Homer.[1]

During the trial of Archbishop Laud, one of the main charges brought against him by the wretched fanatic Prynne was that he had kept Montagu's books in his study. ' Oh yes,' answered the Primate scornfully, ' I have Bellarmine in my study, therefore I am a Papist ! I have the Alcoran in my study, consequently I am a Turk ! '[2] The private copy of the Controversies referred to in this spirited retort is now in the library of St. Sepulchre's, commonly known as Archbishop Marsh's Library, Dublin. After Laud's death, it came into the hands of Bishop Stillingfleet, who made much use of it before selling it to Marsh. Its original owner had written his Christian and surname on the title-page of each of the three volumes (Lyons, 1596 and 1599) but the word ' Laud ' was afterwards carefully erased, the paper in one case having been so badly scratched that a hole appeared. Between the years 1608 and 1621, when he became Bishop of St. David's, Laud was engaged continuously on the study of Bellarmine and used his pen with the greatest diligence on the ample margins of his stately old tomes. These annotations were published separately in 1857, and fill a hundred pages of small print in the Oxford Edition of his works.[3]

In the year 1622, owing to the influence of the Spanish Court and the activity of Jesuit missionaries, the fortunes of Catholicism in England seemed to be mending, and King James became very anxious lest the Marquis of Buckingham and his mother should go over to the Church. The divines whom his Majesty had called in to confirm them in their Protestantism had not been very successful, so he decided, as a final measure, to organize a great religious debate or conference at York House, on 24 May 1622. If he pitted his best theologian against some well-known Catholic advocate, he thought that he might reasonably hope for victory, and that the occasion being a public and solemn one the defeat of the Papist would make all the deeper impression. There was in prison at this time a very capable Jesuit who went by the name of Fisher, and to him an invitation was sent to stand champion for Rome, while Bishop Laud was requested by the King to assume the defence of the Church of England. The two men began their famous duel in the presence of Buckingham and his mother and wife, as well as a large contingent of the most distinguished lords and ladies in the metropolis. From the beginning to the end of it, Bellarmine was taken, almost as a matter of course, by both parties as the decisive authority, and it would be impossible to imagine a more significant testimony to his importance in the theology of that age than Laud's ceaseless endeavours to find flaws in his arguments. The Countess of Buckingham made known to the debaters that what she was in search of was an infallible Church. No one in the wide world can show you that, was Laud's answer, 'No, not Bellarmine himself though of very great ability to make good any truth which he undertakes for the Church of Rome.'[1] After many pages of stern wrestling with the Cardinal's proofs, the Bishop winds up the introductory part of the debate with a personal declaration: 'Indeed, could I swallow Bellarmine's opinion that the Pope's judgment is infallible, I would then submit without any more ado. But that will never down with me, unless I live till I dote, which I hope in God I shall not.'[2] All the way through he makes no secret of his profound respect for this antagonist and agrees 'to be judged by Bellarmine' whose work is so 'great and full of art.' When he thinks he has proved him wrong, he cries victory, as if Catholicism were so dependent on the Cardinal that to catch him nodding was as good as showing it to be in a hopeless plight. In spite of all his efforts Bellarmine won on points, for though Buckingham remained where he was, his mother and wife both became Catholics after the conference.

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[1] Montagu's *Apparatus ad Origines Ecclesiasticas*, Oxford, 1635. Preface, sect. 56.

[2] *The History of the Troubles and Tryal of the Most Reverend Father in God, William Laud, Lord Archbishop of Canterbury. Wrote by himself during his imprisonment in the Tower.* London, 1694, p. 364.

[3] Library of Anglo-Catholic Theology: Laud's works, vol. VI, part II, *Letters—Notes on Bellarmine*, Oxford, Parker, 1857, pp. 608–708.

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[1] *A Relation of the Conference between William Laud and Mr. Fisher the Jesuit.* By the said Most Reverend Father in God, William, Lord Archbishop of Canterbury. Simpkinson's ed., London, 1901, p. 6.

[2] *A Relation,* etc., p. 22.

The men we have mentioned so far were but a few among many famous men who knew their Bellarmine almost as well as they knew their Bible. They were large-minded enough to appreciate him, and sufficiently gentlemen to refrain from abuse, but they were only a small, select corps of the great army of his antagonists. A very ragged army it was for the most part, composed of swashbuckling deans and archdeacons whose language would put a modern fishwife to the blush. Typical of their blood and thunder methods were the many fierce volumes which came from the pen of Dr. Matthew Sutcliffe, Dean of Exeter, and chaplain to the Queen. Their titles alone are a sufficient indication of his style: 'On the Pope and his iniquitous Domination, against Robert Bellarmine and the whole tribe of Jebusites'; 'On Monks, their Mode of Life and Manners, against Robert Bellarmine and the whole Kennel of Monks and Mendicants'; 'On the popish Mass, against Robert Bellarmine and the universal Cohort of Jebusites and Canaanites,' etc., etc. The Controversies, according to this 'petulant railer,' as Beza contemptuously described him, were but a new 'stables of Augaeus containing an infinite heap of dung,' and their author, 'a braggart dunghill of a soldier, a furious and devilish Jebusite, the Hannibal of all the Jebusites.' He was Hercules of course, and he certainly wrote in the proverbial vein of that hero.

Scarcely more restrained in style were the tomes of Robert Abbot, Bishop of Salisbury, and George Downham, Bishop of Derry. These right reverend gentlemen were as handy with an abusive epithet as the Virgin Queen herself or her redoubtable chaplain. Abbot's *Mirror of Popish Subtleties against Sanders and Bellarmine*, which appeared in 1594, might have been written by a bargee, though its author was a Regius Professor of Divinity. Another Bishop, the well-known Anglican preacher Joseph Hall, entered the lists in 1603 with a curious book in which he attempted to show that Rome's boasted unity of faith was a mere fable. In this work, *The Peace of Rome proclaimed to all the World by her famous Cardinal Bellarmine, with a Dissuasive from Poperie*, the Jesuit's opinions are taken as the standard of Catholic orthodoxy and as a test for the opinions of other theologians. Whenever the Bishop discovered the slightest variance between St. Augustine, Peter Lombard, St. Thomas, Duns Scotus, etc., and his self-constituted authority, the Cardinal, he held it up high for the comfort of his countrymen. The book made a great stir, and it is an interesting comment on the controversial penury of the Jacobean divines that its biggest ' hits ' were concerned with such matters as the local position of Purgatory, the origin of the word ' Mass,' whether it was the Eucharist which Christ gave his disciples at Emmaus, the visions of St. Bridget, etc., etc.

3. As a bare list of the other English books against Bellarmine would occupy much space and be uninteresting, a few specimens of their argumentation may prove more acceptable. One way was to garble or, at any rate, misconstrue his text, and this was done not only by the Sutcliffes and Abbots, but by such great doctors as Andrew Willet of Oxford, the famous 'walking library,' whose praises may be found in the *Dictionary of National Biography*. Bellarmine, when discussing the schism of the Donatists, said that St. Augustine had considered a certain opinion of theirs to be most absurd—*Augustinus absurdissimum censuit quod haeresis Donatistarum*, etc. The ' walking library ' translates this sentence as ' Augustine did think most absurdly that the heresy of the Donatists, etc.' and then remarks blandly, ' Bellarmine is somewhat bold sometimes with St. Augustine ! '[1] Another favourite plan which the lesser breed of controversialists adopted was to turn Bellarmine into a Protestant. A good instance of such tactics is afforded by a certain Mr. Doctor Dove who published in 1604 ' A Persuasion to the English Recusants to reconcile themselves to the Church of England.' There he says :

> ' Cardinal Bellarmine, late divinity reader of Rome, and the learnedest divine of that Church which now liveth, in the course of his controversy lectures, though where he delivereth the state of the question, he bringeth what may be brought on their side, for fashion sake, that he may avoid all suspicion of heresy with them ; yet he handleth his matter so cunningly and so doubtfully that in his conclusions he agreeth with us in many things, and in many things he showeth himself to be, as far as he dareth, a Protestant.'[2]

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[1] *Tetrastylon Papisticum ; that is the Foure Principal Pillers of Papistrie*, London, 1593, p. 142. Lest anyone should think that this was a mere momentary lapse on the part of the learned doctor, who enjoyed such authority in the Establishment that his works were reissued as late as 1852, it should be said that he defends his blunder in a long pedantic paragraph on the accusative and infinitive.

[2] *A Persuasion*, etc., p. 12.

The passage in the Controversies which received the closest attention of Blessed Robert's enemies was a famous one from the treatise on the Pope. From the very beginning, anti-Catholic writers who knew nothing else about Bellarmine knew at least this passage, and down to our own day they have never tired of dilating on its iniquity. The Cardinal, as usual, first put down in black and white the proposition which he intended to prove. It runs thus: 'The Pope is infallible, not only when teaching doctrines of faith, but also when prescribing for the universal Church those precepts of morality which are necessary to salvation or which deal with matters that are intrinsically good or evil.'[1] Having duly proved the first part about things necessary to salvation, he proceeds to deal with the second, where the matters intrinsically good or evil are in question. It is here that the celebrated passage occurs, of which the following is a literal translation:

> That the Pope cannot err in matters of morality, which are *per se* good or evil, is proved in the second place from this consideration, that if he were liable to err in such matters, he would also necessarily be liable to err in matters of Faith. For the Catholic Faith teaches that every virtue is good and every vice evil. Should the Pope, then, make a mistake by prescribing vices or prohibiting virtues, that is, by ordering some work that was really evil, though not apparently so, or by forbidding some deed, really though not manifestly good, the Church would have to believe that vices were good and virtues evil, unless she wished to sin against conscience. For when a matter is doubtful, the Church is obliged to acquiesce in the judgment of the Pope, to do what he commands, and to abstain from whatever he forbids.[2]

Bellarmine certainly is not at his best as a stylist in this passage, but an attentive and fair-minded reader will hardly agree with Lord Acton that he '*asserted* that if a Pope should prescribe vice and prohibit virtue, the Church must believe him.'[1] He has proved, at considerable length, a few pages earlier, that the Pope is infallible when defining doctrines of faith to be held by the Universal Church. In this chapter, he takes that conclusion for granted, as he has a right to do, and uses it as the major premiss of a very simple syllogism. The Pope is infallible in matters of faith, but the moral questions under consideration here are matters of faith, therefore the Pope is infallible when dealing with these questions. Having made this plain, he goes on to show the absurdities that would follow from the contrary supposition. To take a modern instance as an illustration, the practice of birth-control is intrinsically evil, and the Church has her own very definite views about it. But let us imagine for the sake of argument that she has not those definite views, that all her theologians are at loggerheads, and that the practice of her members shows an equal diversity. Then suppose that the Pope one day teaches with the plenitude of his power that the practice is a good and virtuous one which all Catholics should adopt. Being a serious moral question it comes within the realm of faith and, as the Pope is infallible in that realm, Catholics are now bound to believe a thing virtuous which in the eyes of God is a monstrous evil. In other words, the gates of Hell have prevailed against the Church, and the Divine guarantee has failed. As such a consequence is impossible, and has already been proved impossible, Bellarmine logically urges that the supposition on which it rests must be impossible too.

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[1] *De Romano Pontifice*, lib. IV, cap. V.

[2] 'Quod autem non possit Pontifex errare in moribus per se bonis vel malis probatur . . . secundo, quia tunc necessario erraret etiam circa Fidem. Nam Fides Catholica docet omnem virtutem esse bonam, omne vitium esse malum: si autem Papa erraret praecipiendo aliquod opus, quod esset revera vitiosum, sed non manifeste vitiosum, vel prohibendo opus virtutis sed non manifeste opus virtutis, teneretur Ecclesia credere vitia esse bona et virtutes malas, nisi vellet contra conscientiam peccare. Tenetur enim in rebus dubiis Ecclesia acquiescere judicio Summi Pontificis, et facere quod ille praecipit, non facere quod ille prohibet.'

His argument is not stated with his usual clarity and precision, but the mere fact that his verbs are nearly all dressed in the subjunctive mood ought to have prevented any educated man from talking about ' the infamous maxim of the Jesuit Cardinal Bellarmine.'[2] The host of writers who used the passage on behalf of the Established Church might at least have had the grace to admit that the construction which they put upon their victim's words was not beyond question. They might even have hinted that he was arguing *ex impossibili*, as who should say, if the sky fall we shall catch larks.

Bellarmine was something of an institution in their Church from the beginning, a kind of gargoyle in its eclectic archi-

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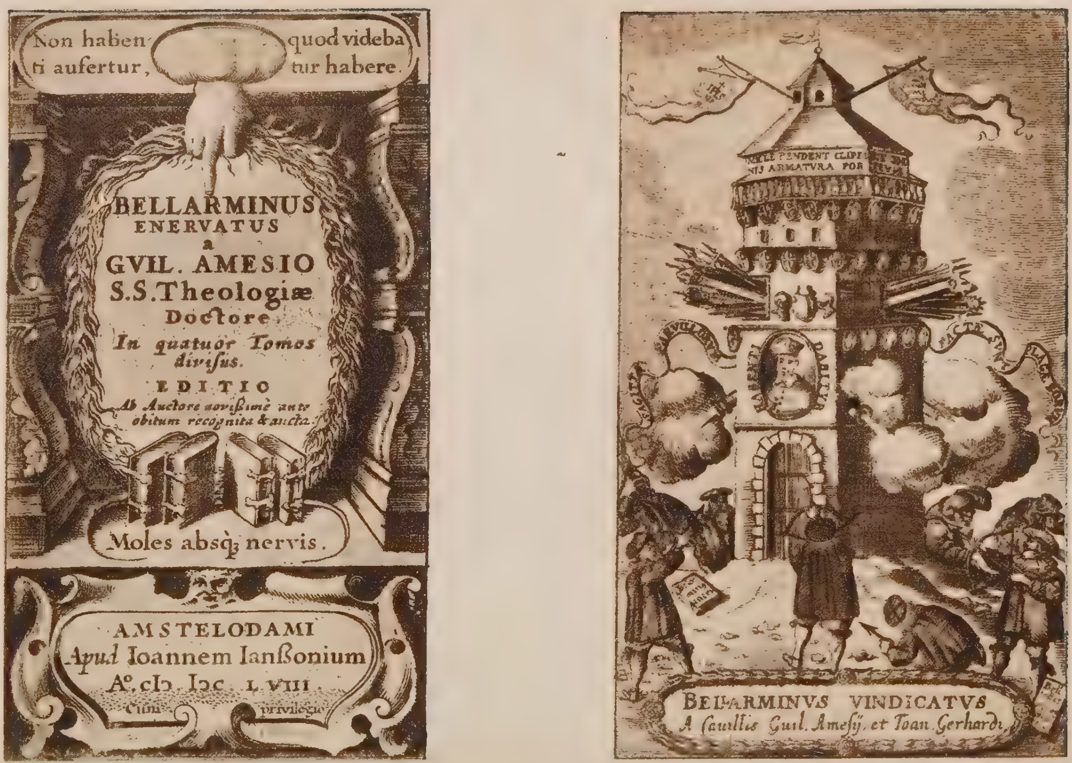
[1] The *North British Review*, Oct. 1869, p. 131. The italics are not in the original. Acton's hostile attitude to Bellarmine is sufficiently explained by the date of his article.

[2] The Rev. J. H. Wrigley, M.A., Vicar of Clitheroe, in the *Clitheroe Times*, 26 January 1923.



Non habenti aufertur, quod videbatur habere.

BELLARMINUS
ENERVATUS
a
GVIL. AMESIO
S.S. Theologiæ
Doctore.
In quatuor Tomos
divisus.
EDITIO
Ab Auctore novissimè ante
obitum recognita & aucta.

Moles absq; nervis.

AMSTELODAMI
Apud Ioannem Ianssonium
Aº. cIↄ. Iↄc. LVIII.
Cum privilegio.

BELLARMINVS VINDICATVS
A Cauillis Gul. Amesij, et Ioan. Gerhardi.

PENDENT CLIPEI
NIS ARMATVRA FOR
HABENTI DABITVR
SAGITTA PARVULORUM
FACTÆ SVNT PLAGÆ EORVM

TWO INSTRUCTIVE TITLE-PAGES.

tecture. Dr. Thomas Brightman, a famous Cambridge preacher, believed devoutly, and persuaded others to believe, that a book which he published against the Controversies in 1609 was written under the direct inspiration of the Holy Ghost. Practically all the great Anglican divines—Hooker, Ussher, Stillingfleet, Pearson, Perkins, Taylor, Sherlock, Barrow, Tillotson, Pusey, etc., made them their target at one time or another, so the non-Catholic writer in the *Encyclopedia Britannica* speaks but the sober truth when he says that their author was 'uniformly taken by Protestant advocates as the champion of the Papacy, and a vindication of Protestantism regularly took the shape of an answer to him.' Already in 1608, Dr. William Bishop spoke of him as 'that renowned and right famous Father Bellarmine.'[1] 'So notorious is he,' wrote the Puritan William Ames, twenty years later, 'that at the bare mention of his name, all men are wont to think straightway of the Philistine champion Goliath, who in helmet, mail, and fearful accoutrements, most wickedly terrified the ranks of Israel, the army of the living God.'[2]

It was not long until that name of terror, which in its owner's native land had four syllables, Bellarmino, came to be adopted in England as a handy symbol for Catholicism, its last syllable getting worn away in the process.[3] In 1605, Thomas Bell, a vociferous person, proclaimed him to be the man 'who hath said all that can be said for Popery, and whose testimony alone is most sufficient in all Popish affairs.'[4] In the following century, the great Protestant Church historian, Mosheim, wrote of him as follows: 'The numerous Jesuits who took the field against the enemies of the Romish Church excelled all the others in subtlety, impudence and invective. But the chief and *coryphaeus* of the whole was Robert Bellarmine. . . . He embraced all the controversies of his Church in several large volumes, and united copiousness of argument with much perspicuity of style. As soon, therefore, as he entered the arena, he drew upon himself alone, the onsets and the strength of the greatest men among the Protestants.'[5] Jumping another hundred years, we find a Protestant publicist describing the Controversies, in the year of Queen Victoria's accession, 'as the most authentic and genuine record of the Pope's twin spiritual and temporal power.'

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[1] *A Reproofe of Mr. Doctor Abbot's Defence*, p. 201.

[2] *Bellarminus Enervatus*, Amsterdam, 1630. The words quoted are the first in the book.

[3] 'We see that in France and England "Bellarminist" is synonymous with "Papist."' Letter of Pierre Coton, 18 Jan. 1613. *Summarium additionale*, n. 6, p. 44

[4] *The Downfall of Popery*, pp. 26, 29, 87.

[5] *Institutes of Ecclesiastical History*, Soames' ed., 1845, vol. III, pp. 275–276.

> So much importance was there attached to Bellarmine's works [continues the writer], that for nearly a hundred years there was scarcely an eminent or learned Protestant divine in Europe who did not publish answers to his ingenious and alluring sophisms. In England, his tract on ' The Notes of the Church ' was considered so important from the learning of the man and its sly, cajoling, plausible character, that *fifteen* of the most distinguished ecclesiastics, including one Archbishop and six Bishops, published formal and elaborate refutations of them, each man taking a separate tract. These tracts were written in a style so masterly that having been circulated rapidly and extensively among the thinking and independent population of England, they awakened the spirit of the nation, and were mainly instrumental in producing that tone of anti-papistical feeling that caused the overthrow of Popery and the ejection of James II.[1]

Whether or not that is good history, it shows at least that Bellarmine continued to be taken very seriously in England. A fair-minded scholar of our own time who had no sympathy with Catholicism wrote the following sober words about his work. 'These volumes exhaust the controversy on all points as it was known in those days, and they are distinguished by their fullness, candour, and lucid arrangement, the absence of disguise and evasion, and the broad and unfaltering statement of theological dogmas. No doubt he presents a truer picture of Catholic opinion than either Bossuet, Möhler or Wiseman, in whose treatises the personal peculiarities and mental characteristics of the authors may be distinctly traced.'[1]

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[1] Bellarmine, as is well known, suggested no less than fifteen notes of the Church which, however, he pointed out, could be reduced to the traditional four. The answers of Archbishop Tenison, Bishop Stratford, etc., referred to above, were first published in 1687, the year before the Glorious Revolution. On 24 January 1839, *The Times* newspaper called for their reissue, apparently as a counterblast to the activities of Daniel O'Connell. It is from the introduction to this reprint that the quotation is taken. As for the ' masterly style ' of the Bishops, we may be pardoned for giving the following example of it. Bellarmine, following Lactantius, used for his fourteenth note a popular but not very impressive argument, namely the unhappy end of the Church's enemies, and when dealing with it mentioned the death of Calvin as a case in point : *vermibus consumptus expiravit*, he breathed his last eaten up by worms like Antiochus and Herod. Bishop Stratford's solemn answer ran thus : ' It is certain that this distemper by which is meant the *lousy disease* is naturally incident to human bodies, since lice do seem to consist chiefly of that salt, which, together with other humours, does copiously breathe through their pores. This truth may be reasonably gathered from the chemical resolution of lice, and from their medicinal powers and effects in some distempers ; besides that, I have been assured by a learned gentleman much addicted to physical experiments that he, formerly, having three or four days together visited glass furnaces, attending on some experiments there made, has taken from the backs of the glass makers (after they had sweated profusely in the same shirts for three days together) a great quantity of dry salt which was caked on the outside of their shirts, and that the salt being put into a glass and set two or three days in a sunny window, did all become a body of little creeping things like lice.' *Cardinal Bellarmine's Notes of the Church Examined and Refuted.* London, 1839–40, pp. 339–340.

4. On the Continent the Controversies were accorded an even more remarkable reception. The second volume appeared, as has been said, in 1588. Writing from Mainz on 29 September of that year, the Rector of the Jesuit College gave Aquaviva the following piece of information: 'The Frankfurt Fair was not as grand as usual this time, but every copy of Bellarmine's second volume on sale was bought up immediately, and if the booksellers had had two thousand copies for disposal, not one of them would have been left on their hands.'[2] Two months later, the famous theologian, Leonard Lessius, mentioned the first volume in a letter from Louvain: 'I hear that it is being studied in every quarter, even by educated laymen such as lawyers and members of parliament. The copies that came to Louvain were all disposed of the day they appeared.'[3]

In this scramble for the very expensive tomes Protestants were as eager as Catholics. Close on two hundred full-dress replies, the minutely printed titles of which occupy fifteen large columns in Sommervogel's Bibliography, appeared in northern Europe during the first century after their publication. Many of these rejoinders ran into three or four volumes, and their writers were as diverse in creed as in nationality, Lutherans, Calvinists, Zwinglians, Anabaptists, Jews, Socinians, etc., all co-operating. The variety of tactics adopted by them resembled more or less those employed in England, but they had in some cases a special venom of their own. Typical of the meaner kind of controversialist, who considered ridicule and abuse to be effective substitutes for the learning he lacked, was the Belgian Calvinist leader, Marnix de Sainte-Aldegonde. In his *Tableau des Différends*

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[1] Dr. John Eadie of Glasgow University in *The Imperial Dictionary of Universal Biography*, art. 'Bellarmine.'

[2] Le Bachelet, *Bellarmin avant son Cardinalat*, p. 219.

[3] Le Bachelet, *l.c.*, p. 231.

de Religion he pursues with clumsy raillery through page after wearisome page, 'le grand Archirabbi des Loiolites . . . le sursuperintendent de tous les Rabbotenu . . . maistre Robin Bellarmin,' and makes what poor fun he can out of what he calls, 'la ratiocinatoire Robinesque.'

Others who suspected that cap and bells might not become them, resorted to slanders so gross that not even their titles could be mentioned without offending good taste. That prodigy of multifarious learning, the German Jesuit James Gretser, went to the trouble of answering the vilest of these productions, not indeed, he said, because the libel had any art or plausibility in it, but for the sake of simple folk who are apt to believe whatever they see in print. Murder on a grand scale by poison, fire, sword, and drowning, was one part of the charge. The other part, Gretser observes, had never been laid at the doors of even a Nero or Heliogabalus. As far as matter goes, it is certainly the record libel of history. Bellarmine's death is recorded in it with fullest details seven years before it took place. He went on pilgrimage to Loreto, the account runs, and there prayed to the Blessed Virgin for three hours on end that she would obtain for him the pardon of his innumerable crimes. But the statue swung round on its pedestal, and left the wretched suppliant staring horror-stricken at its back. Then in a paroxysm of terror, he began 'to bellow blasphemies like a lion,' and died denying God and Christ and Christianity. The Cardinal's attention was drawn to this cheerful obituary notice. It only amused him, but as the German Fathers wanted a denial, he wrote in 1604, to say that he was not merely alive, but in excellent good health by the grace of God,[1] and even obtained a certificate of his existence for them, drawn up in full legal form by a public notary.

In 1615, the year after the publication of the libel, one of its authors was stricken with remorse, and begged a Dominican Father named Reginald de Coire to obtain Bellarmine's forgiveness for him. The Cardinal answered Father Reginald's letter on 10 July 1615:

> Reverend Father, I am writing with my own hand in order that the suppliant who desires my pardon may have certain evidence of my perfect good will in his regard. Accordingly, with all my

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[1] 'Ego per gratiam Dei non solum vivo sed optime valeo.' Apud Gretser, *Opera*. Ratisbonne, 1737, vol. XI, pp. 911 sqq., where a full account of the slander is given.

heart, and with God Himself, in whose sight I stand, as witness, I completely forgive him. Even though I knew the man and could have him punished personally or in the criminal courts, I would not dream of doing so. On the contrary, if he needed my help I would most gladly assist him. . . . Your Reverence may further tell him in my name that I will not forget to pray that God too may forgive him. . . . [1]

The attempts at serious refutation of the Controversies were equally varied in method, minute criticism of the text being a favourite one with the more ponderous kind of doctor. It was taken line by line to be put under the Protestant microscope in the hope of finding flaws in its logic, and perhaps nothing shows so well how the work was feared, as the whoops of triumph which greeted the discovery of any little inadvertences, slips of memory, or inexact quotations. Conrad Voorst or Vorstius, the Arminian theologian declared by King James of England to be ' the most remarkable atheist which our age hath borne,' [2] was to the fore in this department with his huge folio entitled *Anti-Bellarminus Contractus*, and other volumes. But his achievements were quite eclipsed by those of a French Calvinist named du Jon or Junius. Junius could never get Bellarmine out of his head. The Cardinal literally haunted him. ' When I was in upper Germany, twelve and more years ago,' he wrote in 1600, ' I often heard the work of Robert Bellarmine praised in the highest terms. Men said that he had dealt carefully and copiously with the arguments for his creed, and it was the opinion of many that no one on our side would ever have the courage to undertake the refutation of his work as a whole. . . . Not a few good men begged me at that time, in 1588, to try my skill some day at a reply, and it certainly seemed to me that there was no work more deserving of the zeal and application of scholars. God grant that they may take it up and vindicate His truth against the lying commentaries of men.'[1] At times, Junius becomes quite pathetic when he thinks about the Controversies. Thus in the preface to another book against them, published in 1603, he writes: 'Dear God, how many men have I heard of in Germany, in Belgium, in France, who, pillowing their drowsy heads on the cushions Bellarmine has provided, are led away, poor deluded fools, from Holy Writ, from religion, from piety. May the Father of mercies forgive them, and repentance take hold of their hearts, so that abjuring the study of falsehood they may fly to the camp of the Lord, and be brought there to the practice of true self-denial and faith in God. Ah, many indeed are the men who take Bellarmine for their master, who look upon his pages as the ancients did on the oracles of the Sibyl, who consider his arguments and testimonies to be invincible, and who, in a word, glory in his writings as if they were the very truth of God Himself.'[2]

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[1] Process of Beatification, 1828, *Informatio*, p. 208.

[2] Winwood, *Memorials of Affairs of State*, London, 1725, p. 311. King James threatened to break off diplomatic relations with the States General unless they expelled ' the most remarkable atheist ' from their borders. His books were burned by the common hangman at Paul's Cross, and James gave the Dutch Government a strong hint that their author ought to share the same fate. The King had no love for Jesuits, but he liked Vorstius still less, and so we have the following amusing instance of Beelzebub being invited to try his hand at exorcism. Sir Ralph Winwood writes to Mr. Trumbull, English representative at the Hague, 12 December 1611 : ' If you have any good acquaintance with any smarte Jesuit who hath a quick and nimble spirit, who would at your instance (though you be not seen in it) bestow a few lines against the atheisms of the wretch Vorstius, assure yourself that you shall do a service well-pleasing to his Majesty.'

One can hardly help feeling a little sympathy for the writer of these lines. He was obviously sincere, and the spectre of Bellarmine continued to frighten and puzzle him until his dying day. Before the plague struck him down at Leyden, a small library of detailed criticisms of the Controversies stood as the monument of his respect for the great Cardinal. He could never bring himself to believe that the Controversies were the work of one man, and over and over again we find insinuations in his prefaces about their multiple authorship. 'What shall I say about the persons responsible for the Controversies?' he writes. 'Methinks it is not one Bellarmine who speaks in these pages, nor merely a handful of his brethren. It is the whole Jesuit phalanx, the entire legion of them mustered for our destruction. Some read the authors and look up references. Others copy out notes and hand them to the lecturer. All of them are engaged providing him with the ammunition which he uses against us with an art and vehemence peculiarly his own.'[3]

This allegation, which Junius was far from being the only one to make, is perhaps the best compliment ever paid to Bellarmine's work. Out of it arose the story that his name was in reality an anagram, Robertus standing for *robur* or strength, and *Bellarminus* giving *bella* or wars, *arma*, weapons, and *minae*, threats; in a word, the whole paraphernalia of Jesuitry. To this solution Father Gretser replied in two neat couplets:

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[1] *Opera Theologica Francisci Junii*, Geneva, 1613, vol. II, col. 539.
[2] *L.c.*, col. 1423.
[3] *L.c.*, col. 541.

> Robore cum valeas, habeasque a robore nomen
> Haereticis merito bella, arma minasque minaris.
> Non solum hoc, sed et arma infers et Martia bella,
> Robustis quadrant, bella, arma, minae lacertis.[1]

But the answer in sober prose of Bellarmine's life-long friend, Father Eudaemon-Joannes, is much more to the point. 'Would Danaeus please tell us,' he says, addressing another critic, 'how he found out that the Controversies were a compilation, and on what arguments he bases his belief in that story? Certainly the style of the work is consistent throughout, and we see everywhere in it the same lucid method, the same wealth of loyal erudition, the same serious and yet simple tone. . . . Indeed, the only argument one can think of, is that Bellarmine's adversaries, astounded at his learning, linguistic skill, and vast reading, are unable to believe that one man can be the possessor of so many gifts. But I who lived for years under the same roof as Bellarmine, and all my fellow-Jesuits in Rome at the same time, can swear that he not only wrote his books without assistance, but that he never had even a secretary or amanuensis. It was by his own industry and zeal that he gathered together the furniture of his volumes, and it was with his own hand that he wrote them out from beginning to end.'[2]

It would be wearisome to pursue any further the endless and complicated history of anti-Bellarmine activities, but before concluding, we may glance briefly at one or two other salient features of the struggle. On the Continent as in England, the doctors strove to make Blessed Robert appear a patron of their own cause, the most elaborate effort of the kind being a work entitled *Bellarmine the Witness of Orthodoxy*, by Johann Ernst Gerhard, professor of theology at Jena. Sibrand Lubbert was another of these contortionists who manipulated the Cardinal's text, and a third, the prolific Samuel Werenfels, whom we find calling his readers' attention to 'that memorable passage in Bellarmine where he proves that transubstantiation is a novelty.'[1] Bellarmine, of course, proved nothing of the kind. He merely admitted that the word Transubstantiation was comparatively new, and pointed out that the same might have been said at one time of the words Theotokos and Homoousios.[2] That men should have thought it worth while to try and twist his sentences into a Lutheran shape is itself a testimony to his renown. A whole literature grew up around his name composed of books with such significant titles as *Bellarminus Notatus*, *Bellarminus Correctus*, *Bellarminus Enervatus*, etc.

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[1] *Opera Gretserii*, VIII, *Satyra in Haereticos*.

[2] Andreas Eudaemon-Joannes Cydonus: *Castigatio Lamberti Danaei Calviniani Ministri*. Ingolstadt, 1605, lib. I, cap. vii. Danaeus was much nastier than Junius in his insinuations. Referring to the treatise *De Verbo Dei*, he wrote: 'Although several men helped to compile this work, Bellarmine, inflated with pride, took all the glory to himself.'

According to Frizon, Couderc, and other biographers, special colleges were established for the sole purpose of studying and refuting the Controversies, but this statement is certainly an exaggeration, as there is no evidence that the *Collegia Bellarminiana* were anything more than what we should call study-circles. Students at the universities grouped themselves round some favourite professor, and practised under his guidance the best methods of answering the 'great hyperaspistes of the Roman Curia,' as one comical Calvinist had dubbed him. David Paraeus, professor of Scripture at Heidelburg, was the most active and zealous promoter of these 'Colleges.' It was probably forgetfulness of the fact that the German word *Kollegium* means a course of lectures as well as a college in the usual sense, which led the Cardinal's biographers to assume that the *Collegia Bellarminiana* were educational institutions of a particular kind. England seems to have been the only country to embark on such a venture, Dr. Matthew Sutcliffe, Bellarmine's greatest enemy in these parts, having won King James's warm approval for the project.

The preamble to the statute passed by Parliament in 1609, states 'that His Majesty, for defence of true religion, now established within this realm of England, and for the refuting of errors and heresies repugnant unto the same, hath been graciously pleased by his letters-patent under the great seal of England, to found a college at Chelsea near London, and therein to place certain learned divines, and to incorporate the same by the name of the provost and fellows of the college of King James, in Chelsea near London, of the foundation of the same James, King of England, and hath of his most gracious bounty and goodness, not only endowed the same

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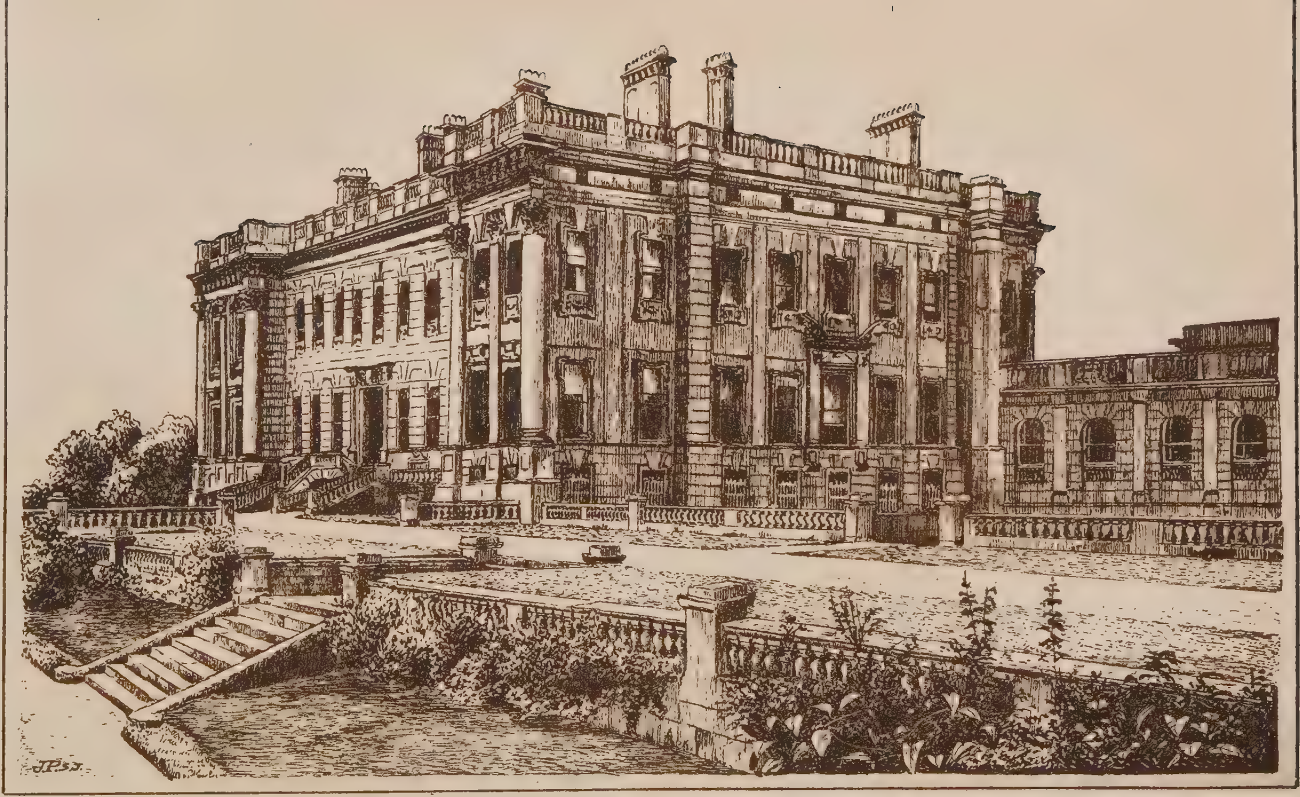
[1] *Opuscula Theologica*, Lausanne, 1739, vol. I, p. 221.
[2] *De Sacramento Eucharistiae*, lib. III, cap. xxiii.



A REAL COLLEGIUM BELLARMINIANUM.

Heythrop College, Chipping Norton, Oxfordshire, the Philosophical and Theological Seminary of the with certain lands, privileges and immunities, but hath also for their further maintenance and sustentation given unto them a capacity and ability to receive and take from His Majesty or any of his loving subjects, any lands, tenements, hereditaments, gifts, benefits and profits whatsoever, not exceeding in the whole the yearly value of three thousand pounds.'[1] The College, Fuller informs us, 'was intended for a spirituall garrison, with a magazine of all books for that purpose; where learned divines should study and write in maintenance of all controversies against the papists.'[2] King James himself laid the first stone of the new edifice on 8 May 1609, and gave all the timber necessary, out of Windsor Forest. The building was to be a very grand one, but before an eighth of it was up, funds ran out, and the King had to ask Archbishop Abbot to arrange for collections to be made on behalf of it, in all the dioceses of England. The zeal of both clergy and people, however, did not rise to the occasion, and Provost Sutcliffe with his nineteen Fellows soon found that to make a living by fighting people like Cardinal Bellarmine was not the way to prosperity. Sir Christopher Wren's picturesque Hospital rose on the site of the derelict College in the reign of Charles II, and to-day the red-coated veterans of another kind of warfare walk shakily but with backs ever so straight, where of old doctors in their black gowns went about with bowed heads planning their next offensive against Rome.

Just as we have had to qualify the account of the controversial colleges given by Bellarmine's biographers, so, too, are we obliged to doubt their confident assertion that the arch-heretic Beza exclaimed, pointing to their hero's first volume: 'This one book throws us all to the ground.'[3] Literature is full of such apocryphal exclamations, and besides, Beza was the last man to give away his cause so openly, whatever he may have thought about Bellarmine in his heart. However that may have been, an authentic story of later date shows that Protestant apprehensions were very real, and continued to be felt for a long time. Cardinal Pacca, the distinguished Nuncio and Minister of Pius VI and Pius VII, tells it in his memoirs, when writing about his passage through Augsburg. :

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[1] 7 James I, cap. ix.

[2] *Church History*, book x, sect. iii.

[3] The story is ancient enough, as it is in Fuligatti's *Vita*, 1623, p. 70. No reference is given, so it is impossible to discover on what foundation it rests. All other writers, e.g. Alegambus, Bartoli, Frizon, Couderc, etc., simply copy Fuligatti.

> I wished to see the library of St. Anne which belongs to the Lutherans. Mertens, the Protestant minister who received Pius VI there, was still in charge, and having told him that I proposed to visit the library, I found him waiting for me on my arrival. As I got out of the coach, he caught a fold of my robe and kissed it, saying : ‘ I had the honour of receiving here the great pontiff, Pius VI, and I am pleased to-day to have the honour of receiving his representative.’ Then he took me through the library, talking all the time enthusiastically of Pius VI. When I was about to leave, he said to me : ‘ I would like to show you before you go the books we keep under lock and key.’ Opening a cupboard, he pointed out to me among the prisoners in it ‘ Bellarmino,’ and as he mentioned the name, he smiled, thinking rightly that it would give me pleasure to learn from a Protestant minister how much fear the works of that great controversialist inspired in their party.[1]

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[1] ‘ Voglio ora monstrarle i libri che noi custodiamo sotto chiave ; ed aperto un armadio tra i libri ivi chiusi m’indico col dito, e mi nominò sorridendo “ Bellarmino,” immaginandosi, e non a torto, che mi avrebbe fatto piacere il sentire e conoscere da un ministro protestante quanto timore incutevan loro le opere di quel grande controversista.’ *Memorie Storiche di Monsignor Bartolomeo Pacca sul di lui soggiorno in Germania* (1786–1794), Roma, 1832, pp. 23–24.

CHAPTER IX

THE SPIRIT AND INFLUENCE OF THE CONTROVERSIES

1. Everything which a man writes is, in some sense, autobiographical. The style is the man himself, and even his efforts to be impersonal are a clue to his personality. For this, as well as for other reasons, a further study of the Controversies, in themselves and in their historic setting, may be a help towards a deeper appreciation of Bellarmine's character and a better understanding of the rôle which he filled in the progress of Catholicism. The spirit of his work, the gentle courtesy that pervaded it, and its serene objectivity, all served to put it in a class apart. Many years after its author's death, when the official inquiries with regard to his sanctity were in progress, one cardinal recorded his vote in the following terms :

> Of Bellarmine I shall say this, if his passing deeds which have been brought to your notice by men who witnessed them do not convince you of his virtues, look at his written works. You have before you all those volumes of theology which he composed at the cost of so much toil for the defence of the Catholic Faith. The one thousand two hundred and thirty-one chapters of his Controversies are one thousand two hundred and thirty-one arguments in proof of the man's heroic faith and hope and charity.[1]

Another cardinal pointed out that only heroic faith could have removed all the mountains that stood in the way of his achievement. And surely he was right. Bellarmine's faith was indeed everything to him, a vital, operative, enthusiastic, crusading faith which much more than a natural love of learning, or debate, or anything else, created the Controversies. The very first time he spoke to his students at Rome, faith was his theme, and the zeal of his soul broke through professorial reserve while he was speaking. 'How infinitely worth while, Gentlemen, and how heartening is the task before us,' he said. 'For our work is to win back to the light of faith men lost in heresy, or if we cannot win them back, at least to shield the fold of Christ from their depredations.' Heresy, to a man with his vivid apprehension and love of the truth, was the most terrible of all spiritual disasters, 'a greater evil than all other crimes and infamies in the same way that the plague is more formidable than the ordinary run of diseases.'

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[1] *Relatio Caroli Alberti Cardinalis Cavalchini*, Romae, 1753, p. 31 (*a*). The voter mentioned was Cardinal Laurea.

> Two things [he continues] give the plague its peculiar terrors, the speed with which it reaches and poisons a man's heart, and its awful power of propagation. Let it but enter a single house to-day, and to-morrow it will have filled a whole countryside with corpses. Now just exactly what the plague is to the body, heresy is to the soul. The first gift of grace which we receive from our Father in Heaven, the first stir of the life divine in our hearts, the first feeling of our spiritual existence is, beyond all question, faith. From its faith the soul is by degrees stirred up to hope, the will inflamed to love, and the energy of a man set free for employment in God's service. Since, therefore, heresy continually seeks to destroy this very heart of a man's soul, what more awful pestilence could be imagined? If a Catholic falls into sin, if he be guilty of theft or adultery or murder, it is sad enough. But still, since a spark of life survives, since faith remains, he does not walk in utter darkness. He knows where to find his cure, and can cry to God out of a believing heart for mercy and forgiveness. But what can the poor, wilful heretic do? In him the lamp of faith has been quenched. He is alone in the night and, knowing not whither he goes, the more he runs the farther he finds himself out of his direction.

Passages such as these are the real explanation of Bellarmine and his books. However dispassionate they may seem, it was a great passion that made them, a zeal as fervent as that which carried men like Xavier to the ends of the earth. St. Francis de Sales used to wonder at the strength of faith which enabled him to absorb, without detriment to his soul, the poison of anti-Catholic polemics. *Nihil minus cognoscit quam quod scripsit*, said the Saint; what he wrote about was what he knew by experience least of all.[1] His faith and trust in God and God's cause were his prophylactics, and he had, besides, more than a touch of that imaginative genius which can see the world's significance as other men see it, without any dimming of the vision which is its own. A very interesting and lengthy study might be written on the quotations from heretical books to be found in Bellarmine's pages. They are extraordinarily numerous, and obviously taken direct from their sources. The Institutes of Calvin are, perhaps, most in evidence, so much so that one might put together a first-rate account of Calvinism with the sole aid of the Controversies.[1] Luther, also, is everywhere to the fore, and next in importance come Melanchthon, Zwingli, and Beza. Chemnitz, however, is the man with whom he has the liveliest brushes, and when Brentz, another outstanding heretic, turns up on the scene, there is generally some extra diversion. Besides these protagonists, Peter Martyr, Bullinger, Bibliander, Carlstadt, Chytraeus, Swenckfeld, Simler and many other less notable people come and say their say whenever Bellarmine thinks them worth listening to. The famous Illyricus and his Centuriators have naturally a privileged place in the discussions, and the great heretics of earlier times are not forgotten.

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[1] *Relatio Cardinalis Cavalchini*, p. 34.

The decisive test of a man's love for the truth is the way he deals with his adversary's argument. How, we may ask, does Bellarmine stand the test? Has he sufficient confidence in his cause to give full weight to the objections raised against it, or is he one of the many, many of his age who thought to serve God with the unclean oblation of a lie? Let the Protestants themselves be the first to answer. Though Whitaker considered that he, too, sometimes 'played the Jesuit in matters of no small importance,' he allowed him, in the letter to Cecil already quoted, 'the merit of dealing less dishonestly with the testimonies of the Fathers than is customary with others, and of not captiously or maliciously perverting the state of the question.'[2] The doctor was a meritorious person, in the grim unlovely way of Puritans but, according to Stapleton, he was also a man of colossal conceit, so the most grudging of his praises ought to count for a very big encomium. His avowal was repeated again and again by Protestant writers, only more generously. Thus, nearly a hundred years later, one of their historians wrote that, 'being fairer than the rest of the Jesuits, Bellarmine generally represented the arguments of his adversaries impartially ; and having a greater regard for the truth, if he was mistaken, his errors do not seem to have been voluntary.' [1] Mosheim in the eighteenth century made the same admission :

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[1] Nevertheless, Bellarmine was not, like Bossuet, a historian of Protestant variations. He was a controversialist, and so did not consider himself obliged to show the logical development of the theories which he combated. They appear in his pages piecemeal, and this inevitable isolation from their temporal or textual connections, deprives them of much of their force. Cf. de la Servière, *La Théologie de Bellarmin*, p. 731.

[2] Parker Society's edition, p. 8.

> He [Bellarmine] displeased many of his own party, principally because he carefully collected all the arguments of his antagonists and generally stated them correctly and fairly. He would have been accounted a better and greater man had he possessed less fidelity and industry and had he stated only the feebler arguments of his opponents and given them mutilated and perverted.[2]

Another German writer of our own time expresses the same opinion in a great Protestant work of reference,[3] and so, with emphasis, does the anonymous contributor to the *Encyclopedia Britannica.*

This sense of fair-play, which was so marked a feature of Blessed Robert's controversial dealing, made a special appeal to Englishmen of the most diverse types. Among the narrowest of narrow Evangelicals in the nineteenth century was Edward Bickersteth, the author of a famous classic *On Popery*. Bickersteth was a rabid anti-Catholic,[4] but there was one of the Pope's men for whom he had conceived something like affection, and that one, *mirabile dictu*, was none other than Bellarmine. He could not read him, he said, ' without hoping that he was led before his death to renounce all confidence in anything but God's testimony concerning His Son, and so became a child of our Heavenly Father and an heir of Our Saviour's Kingdom.' [5] At the other end of the scale stands the gracious figure of John Henry Newman. He too, in his Anglican days, was greatly impressed by Bellarmine's candour, so impressed that rather than charge ' so serious and good a man ' with the small lapses occasionally to be found in his pages, he preferred to lay all the blame on ' the unscrupulous system which he served.' [6] At a later date, Bellarmine was to repay the courtesy of Newman and his disciples by becoming their schoolmaster in the Faith. During the pleasant, peaceful interlude at Maryvale after 'the '45,' Mr. St. John, who was acting as cook to the community, wrote to Dalgairns: 'I am beginning Bellarmine with my head full of pea-soup, roly-polies, and ribs of beef, and puzzling my brain all the morning to make a stupid jack turn.'[1] These testimonies from Protestant sources might be multiplied indefinitely, but instead it will be better to conclude this section with a small specimen of the method which evoked them. It is from the preface to the Controversy on the Pope:

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[1] Heidegger, *Historia Papatus*, Amsterdam, 1684, p. 312.

[2] *Institutes*. Soames' ed., III, p. 276.

[3] H. Thiersch in Herzog's *Realencyklopädie für protestantische Theologie und Kirche*, Leipzig, 1897 sq., Band II, s. 553 : ' B's Berichte über die Ansichten und Beweisgründe der Protestanten sind auffallend vollständig und treu.'

[4] The manner of his death was peculiar. On his way to an anti-Catholic meeting in 1846 he was knocked down and fatally injured by a cart in which bricks were being hauled for the building of a new Catholic church.

[5] *On Popery*, p. 8.

[6] *Via Media*, pp. 65–68.

> In nothing are the heretics so zealous as in hunting out the vices of Popes. But we freely admit that these vices were numerous enough. Lest men might seek to explain the stability of St. Peter's See by the blameless lives of its occupants, God permitted that there should be some bad Popes, among them being Stephen VI, Leo V, Christopher I, Sergius III, John XII, and not a few others, if we may trust their biographers. But instead of obscuring and lessening the prestige of the Roman See, the lives of these men served rather to emphasize its greatness. For the failings of the Popes bring home to us this truth, that the Papacy stands not by the wisdom or prudence or strength of man, but by the might and protection of God.

2. We now come to an episode in Bellarmine's life which has not been recorded before in his biographies. It is easy to guess why it was left out, and it is for the very same reason that it is here put in. Blessed Robert, in the story, would not stay on the pedestal which his admirers had fashioned for him from his babyhood. He insisted for once on jumping down and being numbered with the 'rough-spoken world' of the hymn, in which the rest of us live and move and have our being. This manœuvre seems to have disconcerted his biographers. They thought it best to look the other way, and so a stroke of capital importance was omitted in their delineation of his character. The narration of the incident will serve two purposes, it will supply that missing stroke, and it will confirm what was said in the previous section about Bellarmine's candour in controversy.

Some of his own brethren did not approve of his frankness. They apparently considered that he overdid the *preux chevalier* with his long and strong quotations from Protestant sources, and one of them, a prominent Hungarian named Stephen

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[1] Ward, *Life of Newman*, I, p. 120.

Arator, sent the General of the Jesuits a very sharp criticism of the Controversies. 'Learned prelates out here in central Europe,' he said, 'consider that they have done more harm than good to the Church. Instead of depriving the heretics of their weapons, they do but supply them with new ones. Calvinists and Lutherans would never have had the wit to think out so many and such excellent arguments for their sects as they may now find in Bellarmine. The result is that his volumes are being bought up by Protestants more than by Catholics.'[1] Arator, however, was honest enough to end his protest with a confession that he had 'read very little of the Controversies,' and was merely repeating what he had heard others say. Aquaviva answered the self-constituted censor at once: 'I am astounded at what you write about the Controversies of Father Bellarmine, as the almost universal estimate of them is so utterly different. It would be a good thing, then, if your Reverence would send me a list of those matters which you consider need correcting.'[2] On the receipt of this letter, Father Stephen mistakenly concluded that he had been constituted an official censor. He read the first volume through hastily, noted down two dozen *corrigenda*, and posted them not only to Aquaviva but also, with unsolicited zeal, to Bellarmine. Much worse, however, than this impertinence, was the report which he spread in Vienna that he had been appointed to revise the Controversies because they were a suspected and dangerous work. Other Jesuits, too, showed themselves disloyal and unfriendly, some going out of their way to criticize Bellarmine in their lectures, while a few went further and charged him with stealing his matter from no less a person than Dr. Michael Baius![3]

Such domestic differences will always be apt to arise while men are men, nor is it any discredit to Bellarmine that he should have withstood his detractors to their faces. In his remonstrance to the General he disposed of their allegations with considerable warmth, but added that what saddened him most was the disunion those tactics betrayed: 'Instead of all pulling together as we ought, we bite one another, and in very truth, the enemies of a man are those of his own household.'[4] Aquaviva replied in very affectionate and fatherly terms:

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[1] Le Bachelet, *Bellarmin avant son Cardinalat*, p. 316.
[2] Le Bachelet, *l.c.*, p. 317.
[3] Le Bachelet, *l.c.*, p. 320. [4] Le Bachelet, *l.c.*, p. 321.

> I have been not a little grieved to hear of the despondency which Father Arator's letter has caused you. But do not take it too much to heart . . . I shall not fail to apply the proper remedies. . . . Be it known to your Reverence that your books are welcomed and approved so warmly by those who understand them, that such readers would not dream of paying any attention to Father Arator's effusions. . . . Take good care of your health, and work away at the completion of the volume which you have in hand. I know for a fact that nowhere is it awaited with greater eagerness than in those very parts where your credit is supposed to be at stake. Your servant in Our Lord, Claudio.

As so often happens, the most charming part of the letter is in the postscript:

> *Padre mio*, you must not let this idle gossip make you downhearted, nor must you surrender on account of it one little bit of the joy which you take in your work. That is exactly what the devil would like to happen. He does not approve of your labours.[1]

It cheers us average people a little to see an occasional flash of the old Adam in the Saints, and the following answer from Bellarmine provides us with our consolation:

> I thank your Paternity very much for setting my doubts at rest, because, to tell you the truth, I could not make out why there should have been all this eagerness to pass new strictures on my book. Least of all could I understand why this should have been undertaken by a man who enjoys no great name as a scholar. I knew him in his student days and he was not a star, to say nothing else about him. . . . His principal censure is the last one, where he says that I provide answers to all the arguments of the heretics, and even admits that I do the work well. Nevertheless, he reprehends me, because, as he puts it, the heretics can now dig out of my books the arguments of Luther and Calvin, and because there seem to be as many arguments given on their side as on the side of the Catholics. But if that objection were sound, it would be necessary to prohibit the book of the holy Bishop and martyr of Rochester in which he gives verbatim the complete text of one of Luther's works. And the books of Tapper of Louvain, Sanders, and others would also have to be forbidden because they have cited the arguments of their opponents in their opponents' own words. On the other hand, we should have to praise the work of the Spanish friar, Orantes, to the skies, a work which makes all the educated Catholics of France and Germany weep, and all the heretics hilarious, because the author after answering a few petty arguments of Calvin, pretends that that gentleman has nothing better to say for himself.

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[1] Le Bachelet, *Bellarmin avant son Cardinalat*, pp. 323–324.

I must confess to your Paternity that this censure has wounded me more than the others, as it suggests that I wanted to favour the enemies of our faith. . . .[1]

At the time of writing this letter, January 1592, Bellarmine was an invalid at Frascati. Thither, at his request, the first volume of the Controversies was dispatched, and having received it he began his long, conclusive answer to the criticisms of his Jesuit brethren. This he then sent to Aquaviva, with a covering letter in which the fire of his Tuscan blood is for once given its opportunity.

I am posting your Paternity my reply to Father Stephen Arator's censures. It may sound a little harsh, but I thought this necessary in order to repress his insolence. Never have I seen, as far as I can remember, less knowledge combined with more presumption. He is so confident in the expression of his ignorance, that he did not consider his censures needed any revision, with the result that names, places, and events are mixed up and muddled in them again and again. I say nothing about the lack of moderation in his style, nor about the boastful way in which he gives himself out for a master, and proposes to amend mistakes by some occult power of divination. . . . All this would matter little if he had not himself committed more than ten of them in the process, as I have noted in the margin of my manuscript. If I did not feel certain that your Paternity would make him retract these errors, and that he would obey, I would feel bound in conscience to denounce him to the Inquisition as being a dangerous man in these times and in his part of the world. But in any case, I would not take action without your Paternity's knowledge and sanction, because though I am in duty bound to make known to the Church the Church's danger, I have an equal obligation to be prudent in taking such a step, and to be ruled by those whom God has given to me for guides.[2]

Father Bellarmine did not, and probably never seriously intended to carry out this rather stern threat, but his grounds for making it, and his general strictures were certainly not without some justification, as his critic had misinterpreted and misrepresented the teaching of the Controversies on practically all the twenty-four points in question. There was an air of patronage, too, about his censures which would have exasperated the meekest of men. 'Good Father Bellarmine' is constantly accused of inadvertence, contradictions, misquotations, opposition to St. Thomas and the Fathers of the

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[1] Le Bachelet, *Bellarmin avant son Cardinalat*, pp. 324–325.

[2] Le Bachelet, *l.c.*, pp. 326–327.

Church, etc., etc.[1] Some of his criticisms are childish, as, for instance, when he proves to his own obvious satisfaction that Bellarmine has given away the whole case for Papal infallibility by admitting that Pope Zozimus had made a mistake in reckoning the date of Easter. He did not even get the name of the Pope right, as his victim pointed out, but mixed him up with Zephyrinus. His worst offence, however, was the attack he made on the Controversies for their fair presentation of Protestant opinions. 'The Lutherans and Calvinists will have no further need of Luther's and Calvin's books,' he said. 'They can find all they want here, but I trust, nevertheless, that the Controversies may do more good than harm to many who read them.'[2] Bellarmine's comment on this passage is singularly moderate:

> If I had brought forward the arguments of both Protestants and Catholics and left the two sets to stand without further remark, there would be something in what my censor says. But since I have refuted the heretical and strengthened the Catholic position, what room is there for cavil? On the other hand, had I not produced all the arguments I could discover on their side, the heretics would say that the ones I omitted were unanswerable, while the Catholics would accuse me of prevarication. That was the reproach brought by learned men against Erasmus in his discussion of free-will, and against some others, better left unnamed, who brag that they have answered Calvin while leaving his main arguments absolutely untouched. Finally, there is the testimony of Pope Innocent IX, lately dead. When he had carefully read through the first volume of the Controversies twice, he not only commended me for bringing forward and solving all the difficulties I could find, but said he wished that I would undertake to answer all conceivable difficulties. I think I may be permitted to oppose the judgment of that great Pope to the judgment of my censor.

It is plain from all this that Bellarmine was anything but a tame, colourless kind of saint. Such saints, indeed, exist only in the imaginations of pious biographers. In the case before us, Arator's criticisms, utterly unfounded though they were, might have seriously compromised Bellarmine's orthodoxy, and so ruined any chances the Controversies had of doing good. Furthermore, it is well to remember that the anger of the man against whom the criticisms were levelled was confined to private letters between himself and a dear friend who understood him thoroughly.

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[1] Thus in one place Arator says: 'Per inadvertentiam igitur bis positus est nomen Alexandri in contrariis opinionibus,' to which Bellarmine's answer was: 'Non posui per inadvertentiam, sed debita opera, bis nomen Alexandri. Debuisset autem censor consulere loca quae citavi et postea judicare. Ipse autem per inadvertentiam dixit *positus* est *nomen*.' Le Bachelet, *Auctarium Bellarminianum*, p. 406.

[2] Le Bachelet, *l.c.*, p. 414.

Arator was not the only Jesuit to take up arms against his distinguished brother. Cardinal Toledo, an extraordinarily learned but easily ruffled Spaniard, seems also to have been of the opposition party,[1] while another of the same nationality named Henriquez constituted himself a veritable devil's advocate against the Controversies. This man left the Society of Jesus in 1593 to become a Dominican, but returned to his first vocation in later life. It was while he was with the sons of St. Dominic that he carried on his long and bitter campaign to get the ban of the Inquisition put on Bellarmine's work. Aquaviva was Blessed Robert's stoutest defender in this new crisis. He wrote to the Apostolic Nuncio in Spain, begging him to remind the malcontents of the estimation in which Bellarmine was held by the Pope, and of the splendid welcome which his books had received in every part of the world. Cardinal Santa-Severina, an old friend, was also asked to help by obtaining an injunction from Clement VIII that should restrain the Spanish Inquisitors from taking action before they had first notified the Holy See.[2] Bellarmine won the day but, as a result of the campaign against him, a story went about among the Protestants that their great adversary had been officially silenced. Thus King James of England wrote in his *Protest against Vorstius :*

> It is reported, with what truth I cannot say, that the controversial works of Bellarmine are not permitted to be publicly sold in Italy, because his objections are too strong and his answers too weak.[3]

An English traveller of the time appears to confirm the rumour, saying that he sought for the Controversies everywhere, but 'neither that nor Gregory of Valenza, nor any of such quality, could I ever in any shop in Italy set eye on.'[4] However, the explanation of our traveller's difficulty may possibly be the very simple one, that he went to the wrong shops.

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[1] Cf. Le Bachelet, *Bellarmin avant son Cardinalat*, p. 412 ; and Astrain, *Historia de la Compañía de Jesús*, III, pp. 573, 595 sq.

[2] Le Bachelet, *l.c.*, pp. 343–344, 369–370, 372–373.

[3] Quoted in Mayer's *De fide Bellarmini ipsis Pontificiis ambigua*, p. 183.

[4] *A Relation of the State of Religion*, etc., London, 1605, p. 35. The anonymous writer of this book appears to have been Sir Edward Sandys. Cf. Chalmers' *Biographical Dictionary*, IV, 384.

One of Bellarmine's volumes did indeed suffer eclipse for a time, but that curious story belongs to another chapter.

The Catholic opposition to his work is an interesting and not very well known episode in its steady march to fame. A greater man than he was subjected to the same rough usage in the house of his friends. On the 7th of March (his feast-day now!) in the year 1277, the Bishop of Paris proscribed several theses of St. Thomas Aquinas. Eleven days later the Archbishop of Canterbury, Robert Kilwardby, condemned a good deal more of his brother Dominican's teaching, while John Peckham, a famous English Franciscan, fought it bitterly not only in Paris and England but at the Papal Court itself.[1] That is always the way in this imperfect and very conservative world when a man strikes out a new line, or adopts methods not in accordance with the prejudices of his age.

3. It is possible to be fair in an argument without being exactly courteous or generous, like the oft-mentioned head-master who was described by his impartial victim as 'a beast but a just beast.' Many of Bellarmine's opponents were honest enough in their controversial dealings, but very few of them had the grace to be polite, and it is worth inquiring whether the Cardinal himself showed any marked superiority in this respect. Controversy has never been a school for chivalry, we know. In the sixteenth century it was a bear-pit. The depths to which the doctors descended would scarcely be credible had we not abundant evidence in the violently abusive titles of the books and pamphlets which enshrine a little of their elegance. It is not pleasant to play the man with the muck-rake, but something must be said on this point. Catholics were almost as adept at abuse as Protestants. It was an inter-denominational and international art, practised by the Tiber as well as by the Thames.

Andrew Willet, the pompous Oxford professor already mentioned, wrote a work in 1593, entitled: *Tetrastylon Papisticum; that is the Foure Principal Pillers of Papistrie.* In it, the first pillar is made to consist 'of intemperate rayling, with shameful slaunders and untruths', and that it was not a slender, inconsiderable pillar may be seen from the scores of examples which Dr. Andrew cites. Some of the choicest of these are from the great Catholic theologian, Thomas Stapleton, whom Willet, setting up a pillar of his own, calls: 'that black-mouthed Sophister of

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[1] Denifle, *Chartularium*, vol. 1, pp. 543, 624–627, 634.

Louvain.' Another Louvain Doctor, Thomas Harding, is listed there, too, for having described Bishop Jewel as 'a helhound,' and 'a clawbacke of the devil,' and for having shouted across the sea at him: 'As I cannot well take an haire from your lying beard, so wish I that I could plucke malice from your blasphemous hart.' If such language is justifiable at all, its best justification is to be found in the books of people like Robert Abbot, the Bishop of Salisbury. In Abbot's pages, the Pope is never simply the Pope. He is antichrist, the man of sin, the harpy of Rome, the filthy harlot, the filthy and unnatural strumpet, the whore of Babylon, etc., etc. Men with religious vows are idle lossels, filthy belly-gods, swarms of locusts, Romish vermin, full-gorged friars, and so on, while his immediate Catholic opponents such as Bellarmine, are witless sophisters, false harlots, dumb asses, abominable hypocrites, lewd caitiffs, unclean beasts, foul-mouthed hogs, base fugitives, the seed of the devil, false traitors, and the villainy of the theological profession.[1]

It is small wonder that Dr. Bishop, who answered these amenities, should have described Abbot as 'one of the most shallow and beggerliest writers of these days . . . a fumish and foule-mouthed butter-wench . . . by birth but a meane tanner's sonne, who at his first coming to Oxford was gladde to sweep and dresse up chambers and to play the drudge for a slender pittance.'[2] These are but a few, random specimens of printable stuff; much of it is unprintable. The most terrible thing about the controversial literature of that time is the note of personal, venomous hate that runs through it. The Marprelate tracts are classics in the literature of abuse, and so unfortunately are some of the books and pamphlets which were written during the struggle between the Jesuits and the Seculars. Anthony Copley described Father Persons in one of these as 'being a common ale-house squire and the drunkenest sponge in all the parish where he lived,' while Persons, in his turn, described his enemy Watson as 'being so wrong-shapen and of so bad and blinking aspect, as he looketh nine ways at once.'[3]

On the Continent matters were even worse. With Luther's awful example as an inspiration the heretics stopped at nothing in the way of abuse, and the majority of Catholic writers paid

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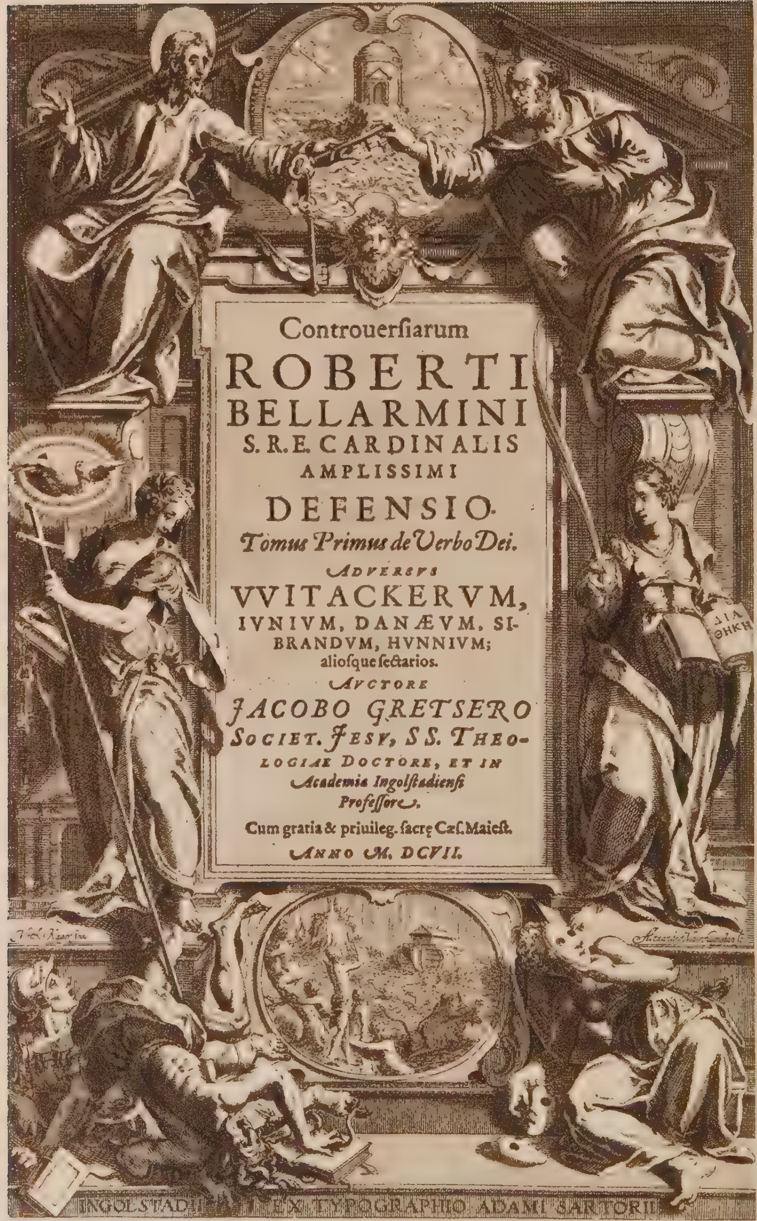
[1] Abbot, *Defence*, etc., pp. 118, 124, 146, 150, 162.

[2] Bishop, *A Reproofe of Mr. Doctor Abbot's Defence*, pp. 16, 124–125.

[3] *A Manifestation of the Great Folly*, etc., 1602, p. 16.



Controuerſiarum

ROBERTI BELLARMINI S.R.E. CARDINALIS AMPLISSIMI DEFENSIO.

Tomus Primus de Verbo Dei.

ADVERSVS

VVITACKERVM,
IVNIVM, DANÆVM, SI-
BRANDVM, HVNNIVM;
alioſque ſectarios.

AVCTORE

JACOBO GRETSERO
SOCIET. JESV, SS. THEO-
LOGIAE DOCTORE, ET IN
Academia Ingolſtadienſi
Profeſſore.

Cum gratia & priuileg. ſacrę Cæſ. Maieſt.

ANNO M. DCVII.

INGOLSTADII EX TYPOGRAPHIO ADAMI SARTORII.

them back in their own coin. 'The foul sayings,' says Grisar, 'which Luther in his anxiety to achieve popularity, gathered from the lips of the rabble, swept like a flood over the whole of the German literary field. Foul language became habitual, and during the polemics subsequent on Luther's death . . . was a favourite method of attack.'[1] Even great scholars such as Scaliger and Casaubon were not exempt from the general failing. Scaliger indeed was famous for his outbursts, in one of which Bellarmine was the victim, and Casaubon too had his fling, though not so intemperately. Bellarmine, he said, 'was a man good for nothing whatever except rhetoric, sophism, and lies, whose norm of truth was not the sacred Scriptures, but the whim of his god, the Pope.'[2] The name of Gaspar Schopp, a Catholic, is notorious as that of one of the most abusive professional gladiators in the history of literature. Our modern Samuel Butler was but a child at the game in comparison. Popes, Jesuits, heretics, and literary men were all in turn vilified by the impartial Schopp, and Schopp was a typical product of his age. Father Gretser, Bellarmine's distinguished German friend, confessed candidly that for himself he was all in favour of vigorous polemics.

> I have sought out Bellarmine's enemies and given them their deserts [he wrote]. I have called a fig a fig, a lie a lie, a calumny a calumny. I have not beaten about the bush, nor do I approve of men who will have nothing but honeyed words from an apologist. The sectaries lie brazenly and intone their calumnies on every side. Shall we not be allowed to cast their lies back in their faces, and give them blow for blow? Now, surely, if ever, is the time to put in practice the Apostolic precept *Increpa illos dure*.[3]

And put it in practice James Gretser straightway did.

4. We have now to inquire whether Bellarmine was any better than his contemporaries in this matter of abusive language. Did this 'great uncircumcised Philistine' of Lutheran imaginations rise above the personalities and vulgarities which were then the stock-in-trade of nearly every controversialist? He did, and in such a striking way as to astonish even his enemies. He is named in Willet's book, indeed, with Sanders, Stapleton, Harding, and the others who

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[1] *Luther*, English tr., vol. IV, p. 323.

[2] *Isaaci Casauboni Epistolae*, Rotterdam, 1709, p. 522.

[3] *Defensio Controversiarum Bellarmini*, *Praefatio*. Aquaviva did his best to keep his Jesuit flock in the straight path, but found it a difficult task. Cf. Le Bachelet, *Bellarmin avant son Cardinalat*, p. 349, n. 1.

provided 'the first Piller of Papistrie, intemperate rayling,' but the author, though writing against him in particular, has to admit that he is 'the mildest and most modest child of all that crue.' In the two million words of the Controversies, the diligent Willet could only discover a dozen which had even the appearance of abuse.[1]

Döllinger held that, in the matter of controversy, Stapleton was a greater man than Bellarmine. He was alone in his opinion, and one cannot help feeling that something more than pure reason went to its making, but even supposing it correct, there are other laurels for a writer besides those of learning, and Bellarmine assuredly has them all. A comparison of the works of the two men, who, by the way, were friends, makes that conclusion plain. They had a common foe in Whitaker, and their attitude to him may serve as a test for the quality of their minds. Stapleton, great man though he was, became ill-tempered in the debate, and belaboured the doctor furiously. 'Should Bellarmine,' he says in one place, 'once more step into the arena and devote a few hours to cleaning out Whitaker's Augean stables, then will that fellow find himself blacker than the blackest coal ever dug out of a mine.'[2] All the way through he writes with a pen dipped in gall, Whitaker being addressed constantly as 'doctor indocte', 'futilissime disputator', 'barbare scriptor', 'fatue asine', etc., and advised that his 'head is thicker than any mallet ever made, a ridiculous head, fitter to wear the cap and bells of a fool than a doctor's boards.'[3]

Now turning to Bellarmine, we have the following delightful story for our text. It was told only sixteen years after his death by Lupton, in his *History of the Modern Protestant Divines*, and as there is no reason to think that Lupton was a consummate liar, what he says cannot be entirely without foundation:

> I have heard it confessed of English Papists themselves which have been in Italy with Bellarmine, that he procured the true portraiture or effigies of this Whitaker to be brought to him, which he kept in his study. For he privately admired this man for his singular learning and ingenuity; and on being asked of some of his friends, Jesuits, why he would have the picture of that heretic in his presence, he would answer: '*Quod quamvis hereticus erat*

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[1] *Tetrastylon*, p. 4.
[2] *Stapletonii Opera*, vol. 1, p. 847.
[3] *L.c.*, p. 905.

et adversarius, erat tamen doctus adversarius': that although he was a heretic and his adversary, yet he was a learned adversary.[1]

Anthony Wood is still more precise in his account. Writing of John Aglionby, Queen Elizabeth's chaplain, he says:

> Afterwards travelling, he was introduced into the acquaintance of Cardinal Bellarmine, who showing him the picture of the profound William Whitaker of Cambridge which hung up in his library, told him, pointing to the picture, that he was the most learned heretic that he ever read.[2]

Though he never wrote anything in reply to the Cambridge doctor, Blessed Robert showed an interest in him which bears out this contested story. 'I will see if I can procure the book of Whitaker's for F. Bellarmine shortly,' writes Father Henry Walpole, the martyr, to Father Cresswell in Rome on 25 July 1591.[3] When dealing with the life of Whitaker, that sturdy and entertaining bigot, Thomas Fuller, describes how he made hay with his Catholic opponents who were excellent only 'at the flat hand of rhetoric.' These teasers (Campion, Sanders, etc.) did but rouse their game and make him find his spirits. 'The fiercest dog is behind,' Thomas continues, 'even Bellarmine himself, a great scholar and who wanted nothing but a good cause to defend, and generally writing ingenuously, using sometimes slanting, seldom downright railing.'[4]

Curiously enough, one of the Catholic criticisms urged against the Cardinal was that 'he poured much abuse on his adversaries and so, instead of inviting and attracting them to the truth, rather irritated them, and spurred them on to further ravings against the Church.' In justification of this censure, its author, a Spanish Dominican named Vincenzo, brought forward two small passages out of the three great volumes of the Controversies. In one of these Bellarmine was replying to a variety of petty accusations which the Centuriators had lodged against successive Popes. He stood their cavils very well up to the end of the chapter, but when at length they based one of their accusations on a letter of St. Cyprian to Pope Cornelius, whereas all the manuscripts testified that the addressee was not Cornelius at all but an

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[1] *History of the Modern Protestant Divines* by D. Lupton, London, 1637, p. 359.

[2] *Athenae Oxonienses*, II, pp. 60–61.

[3] Stonyhurst MS., *Anglia*, A. 1, no. 61.

[4] *The Holy State and the Profane State*, Nichols' ed., pp. 61–62.

African Bishop named Caecilius, his patience suddenly collapsed, and he exclaimed ironically : ' Perhaps these gentlemen of Magdeburg had been over long in their cups prior to the study of this passage, and so with unsteady eyes read one name for the other.'[1] When confronted with this sally its author expressed surprise that anyone should have taken offence at it. ' Why, it was only a little joke, and not abuse at all,' he answered.[2] The comparatively few sarcastic remarks to be found in the body of the Controversies are nearly all of the same kind, ' non tam convicia quam per jocum dicta,' but it must be admitted, all the same, that Blessed Robert is too fond of using the word ' mendacium ' to describe the allegations of the Church's enemies.

His general style may here be illustrated by one or two out of a multitude of examples. Thus when lecturing on Tradition he brings forward a capital passage from St. Basil in favour of the Catholic view. The heretic Brentz had objected that the passage was a mere lapse of the Saint's pen, and ought to be passed over in silence for the honour of so great a man. ' He calls us, who do not agree with him, swine and imitators of Cham,' says Bellarmine, ' for thus laying open our Father's shame. But, leaving out the abuse, because it is not our business to return evil for evil, I answer Brentz that tradition is quite rightly put on a level with the Scriptures.' And then he proves his point as carefully and calmly as if Brentz were his bosom friend. Next, Hermann's objection is noticed, to the effect that the passage in question had probably been inserted by some unscrupulous person into St. Basil's text. It frightens one to think of what Stapleton might have said in answer to such cool impudence. Bellarmine's only comment was : ' A very expeditious sort of reply, sir, and there are not many arguments that could stand against it.' His good temper never fails him, no matter how provocative, absurd, or unfair his immediate opponent may be. Philip Melanchthon had a great deal to say against the invocation of saints, and said it with the customary vigour of his age.

> He calls the Papists asses [remarks Bellarmine], because they teach, on the witness of St. Jerome, that Vigilantius denied that

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[1] *De Romano Pontifice*, lib. IV, cap. viii.

[2] Le Bachelet, *Auctarium Bellarminianum*, p. 416. The objection of Vincenzo was in flat contradiction to that of a more famous Catholic scholar, Sebastian of Verona, who complained (*Chron. Eccl.*, VIII, 45) that Bellarmine often treated his bitter and cunning foes with more mildness than vigour.

doctrine. . . . Now this shows that Philip was, not of course an ass, but certainly very foolish, for though Vigilantius does not say in so many words that the saints are not to be invoked, he does say that they cannot pray for us, and who in the name of common sense would call for help on one who could not possibly give it.[1]

When arguing against Illyricus, the *miles gloriosus* of Lutheranism, he addresses him in a tone of genial banter which is very refreshing after the sledge-hammer invective of the other Catholic doctors. ‘But St. Paul, my dear Illyricus, did not say that,’ ‘My good man, the Pope learned that from St. Paul himself,’ and so on. Tilmann Heshusius, one of the theological comedians of the day, has his leg pulled badly. ‘My candid reader will pardon me for making fun of Tilmann,’ says Blessed Robert. ‘He drove me to it with his chattering and boasting, as if his proofs were clearer and more certain than anything in mathematics.’[2]

At times we find him assuming the defence of some heretical doctor who had been misrepresented in Catholic books. Thus Genebrard, a distinguished Benedictine scholar, had accused Calvin, Beza, and Stancar of teaching that Christ was God of Himself and not from the Father. St. Peter Canisius also charged Calvin with that terrible error in the theology of the Blessed Trinity. After pointing out the gravity of the charge, Bellarmine writes :

> I shall say now what I think about the matter. First, I have been unable to find anything of the sort in Stancar, though I must admit that I have not read all his works, but those only which deal with the Blessed Trinity and the Redemption. As for Calvin, his language, I think, is certainly faulty, and so open to the interpretation put upon it by Catholic writers. . . . But even though this be the case, after diligent and very careful examination of his text, I am not at all willing to say that he believed or taught the heresy in question, and I shall now briefly explain my reasons for putting a favourable construction on his words.[3]

Then in four very brilliant columns he proceeds to establish the Genevan doctor’s orthodoxy on this point.

5. The criticisms to which, as we have seen, the Controversies were subjected by Bellarmine’s co-religionists were soon drowned in a universal chorus of praise. It would be an endless task and require a volume by itself to record all

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[1] *De Ecclesia Triumphante*, lib. I, cap. xvi.
[2] *De Romano Pontifice*, lib. III, cap. xxii.
[3] *De Christo*, lib. II, cap. xix.

the Catholic tributes they received, so the two most illustrious controversialists on whom the mantle of their author fell may be allowed to speak for the rest. They were, beyond the shadow of a doubt, Cardinal du Perron [1] and St. Francis de Sales. Bellarmine was told, on one occasion, that du Perron disapproved of his mild tactics in argument, and was otherwise dissatisfied with his work. Esteeming the great French scholar as he did, the news made him very uneasy, and he communicated his trouble to their common friend, Cardinal de Joyeuse. Joyeuse was furious when he heard of this 'blasphemy' as he termed it, and straightway reported the matter to the man whom it most concerned. Du Perron's subsequent letter to Bellarmine blazed in every line of its bad Italian. He gave him his solemn oath that the story was a diabolical calumny from beginning to end, a calumny that struck him dumb with amazement.

> Not only have I never said nor thought such a thing [he wrote], but on the contrary have always held your work in the highest esteem. No book published in defence of the Church during the past thousand years comes up, in my judgment, to your Controversies. May God put me to confusion if this is not my sincere conviction.[2]

Then he gives the proofs of his innocence, and very telling proofs they are :

> So far was I from thinking your Controversies harmful to the Church that I could imagine no better means for converting Protestants than to have a French translation of them made. All our heretics, and especially the Latinless ones, would then be able to profit by them. My secretary, Chatillon, undertook the task at my express command, and I hired a printer to set up the manuscript in my own house. Your Lordship will remember the letter which Chatillon wrote to you in my name, asking permission for the publication of the work.

The next proof which the defendant offers is that in all his writings he had seized every possible opportunity of praising and recommending Bellarmine's works. As an instance, he mentions his famous conference with du Plessis Mornay at Fontainebleau, when he declared himself openly to be Bellarmine's disciple. Last of all, he brings the Protestants themselves in as witnesses.

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[1] This famous man was a convert from Calvinism and became the most distinguished of the Church's defenders in France. It was chiefly through his efforts that the conversion of Henry IV was brought about.

[2] Cornelius à Lapide went even further than this, saying of the Controversies that 'not since the time of Christ had the Church seen any work as great of its own particular kind'. *Commentaria*, Antwerp ed., vol. 1, p. 10, n. 3.

> Here in France [he writes] these men commonly speak of your Lordship as 'du Perron's Bellarmine,' a little pleasantry which you may see for yourself in their books and sermons. . . . If evil-minded men, jealous of our union, seek by gross calumnies to sunder us, I put it down to my sins, but never will I admit that it was due to any lack of respect and reverence for you. Indeed, I have always considered yourself and Cardinal Baronius to be the two great luminaries of the Church in the present age. I have written this letter in Italian rather than French, so that your Lordship may the more easily penetrate to the feelings of my heart. As for the style of it, I thought it better to risk wearying you with my solecisms than to make known to my Italian secretary the villainous charge which has been fastened on my name.[1]

In his panegyric of St. Francis de Sales, Bossuet recounted a pleasant little story about the writer of the foregoing letter. One day somebody came to ask his advice about the best way to deal with the Protestants. Well, answered du Perron, that depends on the precise object you have in view. If you want to have them convinced, I believe you could do worse than refer them to me, but if you are anxious to have them converted you must take them to the Bishop of Geneva. St. Francis made his first acquaintance with Bellarmine's books many years before he assumed the spiritual lordship of Calvin's chosen city. When he was a young student at Padua in 1588, the first volume of the Controversies was brought to him, hot from the press, by his friend Father Possevino, and became at once his treasure of treasures. There is a popular literary conundrum which asks us if we were to be locked up in a lonely dungeon for life, and were allowed to take only five or ten books with us, which would they be? St. Francis had to make a choice like that when he began, in 1594, his famous mission through the wild, mountainous district of Savoy, known as Le Chablais. The Genevans had forced their Calvinism on the people, and Francis, at the risk of his life, determined to see if he could win them back. He knew that he would have to be often in hiding and always tramping through the snow, so it was necessary to cut down his equipment of books and baggage to a minimum. As regards the books he tells us himself the decision which he made: 'Durant cinq ans en Chablais, j'ay presché sans autres livres que la Bible et ceux du grand Bellarmin.'[1]

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[1] The complete text of this letter is given by Fuligatti, *Vita di Roberto Card. Bellarmino*, pp. 82–86, and it is also to be found in the acts of Beatification, *Summ. addit.*, p. 109. The Fontainebleau debate referred to in it took place in May 1600 between du Perron, then Bishop of Evreux, and Count du Plessis Mornay, the leader of the Huguenots. No religious conference was ever staged on such a grand scale as this one. Henry IV was there, surrounded by all his great nobles, while scholars of the calibre of Casaubon held watching briefs for the two disputants. France from end to end was agog with excitement, the Huguenots to see what their champion, straight from the Embassy in London, would say, and the Catholics hoping to watch him counted out. Their hopes were fulfilled. After the conference, the King remarked to the Duke de Sully: 'The Pope of the Huguenots has been badly thrown.' 'You are right, Sire, to call Mornay a Pope,' answered the Duke, 'for he will certainly make du Perron a Cardinal.' Feller, *Biog. Univ.* VI, 475. Mornay constantly dragged Bellarmine's name into the discussion, which was mainly on the Blessed Eucharist. It was when he said: 'l'Evesque d'Evreux devoit avoir appris de son Bellarmin que Durandus avoit mal creu de la Transubstantiation,' that du Perron, himself the greatest light of the French Church, 'made open profession of his respect for his Jesuit master'. *Les Diverses Œuvres de l'Illustrissime Card. du Perron*, Paris, 1622, p. 194. The rather haughty character of the man gave his words a very special point.

Many years afterwards, in the letter to his friend Monseigneur Pierre de Villars where this detail is mentioned, the Saint gave the outlines of a new book of instructions for preachers, which had been taking shape in his mind. While at work in the Chablais he had written and distributed a great number of leaflets on points of doctrine. These he intended to gather up into one volume in order to provide young priests with a handy compendium of controversial theology. When his book was published, the humble-hearted saint declared that nothing in it was his own 'except the needle and thread,' but that was an estimate which the world refused to endorse. His 'Controversies' have indeed the imprint of Bellarmine on them from beginning to end, but the Doctor of the Church who was their author had a mind that could not touch anything without adorning it, and so there is an added quality in his work, a characteristic Salesian grace which is the best part of it, and which he borrowed from nobody.

We are given a further hint of Bellarmine's growing influence at this time by the brother of another doctor of the Church, Father Theodoric Canisius. Writing from Germany to the General of the Jesuits, 10 May 1587, he said: 'We are on the look out for Father Bellarmine's second volume. The first is being bought up with the greatest avidity, and read with immense fruit.'[1] The drastic criticism which this very volume had received from Arator and others was amply atoned for in a proposal which some important officials of the Order drew up and presented to Father Claudius Aquaviva in 1599. However fond a modern Jesuit may be of Blessed Robert Bellarmine he will not be likely to give his approval to this extraordinary document, which was in the following terms :

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[1] *Œuvres de St. François de Sales*, Annecy ed., 1892 sqq. Lettres, vol. IV, p. 127.

> Perhaps it may be worth while considering a suggestion to the effect that no one henceforth be professed of the four vows until he has read through all the books of Cardinal Bellarmine's Controversies against the heretics. Such a course of reading would be most useful to the Professed Fathers, since it would revive the memory of the studies which they pursued when scholastics. One thing is quite certain, these books open up so fine a road to the proper understanding and wise employment of scholastic and, more especially, positive theology, that no one could be so obtuse as not to derive abundant fruit from them. In addition to this, they provide methodically arranged information about the Fathers of the Church, the Councils, and the Popes. Consequently, study of them lays bare the frauds and deceits of the heretics, and our Fathers, fortified with such information, would be able to confute these men easily, and with the help of God to convert them. Immense indeed might be the benefit to our Society, because her sons would be fitted to travel about in many places beyond the Italian frontier, thus making themselves more useful to the world. Finally, in order to render it certain that the candidate for profession had done his reading, he could be allotted a fairly lengthy portion of time in which to give a summary exposition of all that is contained in Cardinal Bellarmine's volumes. And he might further be expected to know at least their definitions and chief conclusions by heart.[2]

6. When Blessed Robert retired from his office at the Roman College no man was found capable of succeeding him, so the chair of controversy which he had filled for eleven years remained vacant during the better part of a century (1588–1666). But though his voice was heard no more, his volumes remained, and the German and English students continued

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[1] Le Bachelet, *Bellarmin avant son Cardinalat*, p. 171, n. 3.

[2] Le Bachelet, *l.c.*, p. 519. Luckily for future generations, this drastic proposal did not become law.

to receive their lectures out of them.[1] At Douay, the same plan was followed, as the College diary records under the year 1605: 'In the month of January, lectures and repetitions were resumed. . . . Mr. Thomas Flint, who lately had been deported with others from the London prison called Newgate, treats of controversies out of Cardinal Bellarmine.'[2] Very soon he became a standard authority in all the seminaries and intellectual centres of Europe, a great bulwark of the Faith, and under God, the cause of countless conversions. To him might have been applied very literally what St. Thomas of Villanova said of St. Augustine: 'A martyr confirms the faith of believers in the town or city where he suffers, but Augustine confirms their faith throughout an entire world.' He cared nothing for the glory which his labours brought in their train, but the conversions which were their result used to make him immensely happy. Shortly after the publication of his first volume, we hear of whole families in Holland who returned to the Church as a consequence of reading it. In France, Flanders, and Germany, conversions were also very numerous,[3] and England supplied her own distinguished quota.[4]

No story among the many fine stories is so brave and full of pathos as that of Benjamin Antony Carier, who was a Fellow of colleges in both English universities, a canon of Canterbury and a chaplain in ordinary to King James. He studied the Controversies carefully, and so profound was the impression which they made on his mind that he threw up all his emoluments, and went to Cologne to be received into the Church. The King was greatly perturbed and full of wrath when he heard the news. He considered Carier to be the most learned of his theologians, and so took immediate steps to prevent the calamity of his secession. Casaubon and others were directed to write to him, while the King himself sent peremptory orders that he was to return to England at once. Instead of complying, the voluntary exile addressed a very touching 'Missive to His Majesty of Great Britain' which began thus: 'I must confess to God's honour and my own shame that if it had been in my power to choose I would never have been a Catholic.' Referring, in conclusion, to the orders which he had received, he said wistfully:

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[1] Steinhuber, *Geschichte des Collegium Germanicum*, II, s. 8.

[2] *Publications of the Catholic Record Society*, vol. X, p. 342.

[3] Le Bachelet, *Bellarmin avant son Cardinalat*, p. 318.

[4] Many instances are given in Foley's *Records*, e.g. series III, p. 309: XI, part I, p. 612; vol. VI, pp. 214, 232, 258, 346, 351.

But for my returning to England, I can answer no otherwise but this: I have sent you my soul in this Treatise, and if it may find entertainment and passage, my body shall most gladly follow after. And if not, I pray God I send my soul to Heaven and my body to the grave as soon as may be. In the meantime, I will rejoice in nothing but only in the Cross of Christ which is the glory of your Crown. And therefore I will triumph therein, not as being gone from you to your adversary, but as being gone before you to your Mother, where I desire and hope for ever to continue,

Your Majesty's true servant and Beadsman,
B. CARIER.

LIEGE, 12 *December* 1613.

A year later, Dr. Benjamin addressed the following lines to Cardinal Bellarmine:

MOST REVEREND AND ILLUSTRIOUS SIR,—

Had it been possible for me to remain ignorant of the truth contained in your writings, or to deny it, I think this present letter would never have gone to Italy. But since I could not escape the light of your teaching, nor, on the other hand, endure the calumnies of unjust tongues at home, I have left behind me all the books of my library at Canterbury and given up all my other worldly goods, under pretext of taking the waters at Spa, and of travelling in the Palatinate. I have now been received into the Catholic Church by your Fathers at Cologne. And so, with very good reason, I think I ought to write to your illustrious Lordship, not so much to beg your help in my exile as to thank you for the freedom and salvation of my soul. I was, till recently, for many years preacher to the King. . . . But with all my heart I chose the Catholic communion, commended to me by your works more than by any other cause under God, in preference to the position I had already attained and the still brighter hopes that were mine. And so I thank your Lordship with all my heart, not only in my own name but also in the names of very many learned men in England who kindle their lamps and draw warmth daily from your flame. . . . May God renew your old age like unto the eagle's for the peace of His Church and the conversion of England.

Your illustrious Lordship's devoted and humble,
BENJAMIN ANTONY CARIER, D.D.

LIEGE, 10 *January* 1614.

Bellarmine answered his new friend immediately.

VERY REVEREND AND MOST LEARNED SIR,—

Your letter afforded me immense joy. I thanked God with all my heart for the singular grace which He has given you. It is granted to few to recognize the true Church amid the darkness of so many schisms and heresies, and to still fewer so to love the truth which they have seen as to fly to its embrace, generously despising comfort, honour and, above all, royal favour, the unfailing source of such earthly prizes. If in your voluntary exile you have to endure sorrow and want for Our Lord's sake, you will be blessed indeed, being made worthy not only to believe in Christ with your whole heart, but also to suffer for His Name. As in Heaven nothing will be sweeter than to resemble Him in His glory, so here on earth nothing is more to our advantage than to be like Him in His Passion. Hence arises that solid and perennial joy which nobody can steal from us. . . . I do not write this in any spirit of indifference to your present need, which I am more than willing to assist as far as I can, but because I congratulate you from my heart not only on account of your reception into the Church, outside which there is no salvation, but also for the precious gift of patience with which I think Our Lord has adorned your soul. As for my part in the matter, you owe me no thanks at all, for 'neither he who plants is anything, nor he who waters, but God it is who gives the increase.' I only pass on to others what our Catholic Mother has herself passed on to me. If there is any lack of learning in my writings, any obscurity of expression or superficial treatment, you may feel sure that it is in such places I am most original. And so farewell, most learned and worthy Sir. Remember me in your holy prayers.

CARDINAL BELLARMINE.[1]

ROME, 14 *February* 1614.

7. Up to the eve of the Vatican Council the Controversies maintained their place at the head of the Church's apologetic literature. Nothing, perhaps, serves to show better the persistence of their influence than the part they played, not only in the sessions of the Council, but also in the preliminary skirmishes of 1869. In that year, Mgr. Maret, the titular Bishop of Jura, caused a sensation by the issue of his Gallican manifesto entitled, *Du Concile générale et de la paix religieuse*. The aim of that celebrated book was to prove that the Pope is not infallible without the formal or tacit consent of the episcopate. Its author realized quite clearly that he had one main adversary or set of adversaries to contend with before he could establish his views. 'C'est l'école *italienne* et *absolutiste* qui sera l'objet de cet examen. Le grand et vénérable Cardinal Bellarmin peut être regardé comme le chef de cette école. C'est le théologien qui en a exposé les doctrines avec le plus de science, de méthode, de logique, de clarté, de précision ; et on peut

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[1] The first letter (Carier to Bellarmine) is printed in Father Henry More's *Historia Missionis Anglicanae*. Published 1660. Lib. IX, no. viii. Bellarmine's answer is in Fuligatti, *Epistolae familiares*, pp. 237–239.

ajouter aussi, avec un modération relative.' [1] With these preliminary remarks, Maret started off on his criticism of ' la théorie Bellarminienne ' and kept to the argument for 250 clever but inconclusive pages. The ' School of Bellarmine ' and the ' School of Bossuet ' fought their old battles over again.[2] Very soon the controversy became general, Dom Guéranger, the great liturgical scholar, writing a splendid defence ' *De la Monarchie pontificale*,' while Père Gratry and his friends used their abilities on the side of Gallicanism.

When the Vatican Council opened, the question of Papal infallibility was not on the register of its proceedings, nor was it mentioned in the Bull summoning the Fathers. The fact is that Maret's book and the violent controversies following on its publication were the main causes which determined the Fathers to ask for an immediate discussion of the matter. Pius IX, who personally had no desire to see the doctrine defined, agreed with some reluctance, and on 9 May 1870 the commissioners *de Fide* handed the members of the Council two documents, a ' Constitution ' on the Pope, and a report based on the suggestions and remarks of several bishops. The second part of this report was devoted to a refutation of the many objections which had been raised against the doctrine of infallibility. One of these made Our Lord's words : ' I have prayed for thee that thy faith fail not,' etc., refer exclusively to St. Peter, and denied that they could be applied in any sense to St. Peter's successors. The commissioners answered that such a restriction was plainly irreconcilable with the common Catholic interpretation of the text, with the teaching of Pontifical documents on which General

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[1] *Du Concile*, t. II, p. 4. The secondary title of the book explains its immediate purpose : *Mémoire soumis au prochain concile oecuménique du Vatican*. It was a learned work, but wanting in historical perspective, as the use of an expression such as ' l'école italienne ' showed. On this point, Dom Guéranger remarked very appositely : ' Mgr. Maret forgets that we are no longer at the Council of Constance where the voting was done by nations.'

[2] An entire chapter might have been written about Bellarmine's treatment at the hands of Gallican theologians, and it would have been a very lively chapter. Bossuet was dismayed at the extent of his influence and did all in his power to counteract and weaken it. ' I tremble at the thought,' he wrote to his friend Diroys in 1682. ' Is it possible ? Bellarmine reigns supreme and in his own person represents tradition . . .' (*Correspondance*, t. II, n. 260). One has but to glance at the index to James Launoi's letters to be convinced how seriously that great Gallican scholar felt the menace of Blessed Robert's authority. In the course of these letters he grapples with him more than 219 times. Indeed, volume V of Launoi's works (Parts I and II, Cologne, 1731) resounds with Bellarmine's name from beginning to end.

Councils had set their seal, and with the writings of the Fathers and theologians, 'as may be seen by consulting approved authors, such as is undoubtedly Cardinal Bellarmine.' 'It will be advisable,' they continue, 'to cite Bellarmine's entire exposition, as there are some who do not hesitate to quote his authority for the opposite view.' Two hundred words of *De Romano Pontifice* (lib. IV, cap. iii) are then given, and a little later Blessed Robert is allowed a hundred and ninety-seven more words in answer to another objection. St. Thomas and he are the only theologians thus honoured.[1] At Trent, the Bible and St. Thomas ruled the debates; at the Vatican, the Bible, St. Thomas, and Bellarmine.

Very interesting are some of the emendations proposed by individual Fathers for chapter iv of the Constitution *de Ecclesia*. As the Commissioners of the Faith had said, some illustrious members of the Council who were opposed to the definition tried to shelter themselves under Bellarmine's mantle. Thus one Bishop asked that the formula enshrining it should be revised *ad mentem Bellarmini* by inserting after the declaration of infallibility the words, *audito consilio aliorum Pastorum*. Shortly afterwards in the discussion, another Father begged earnestly that some words might be added before or at the end of the declaration to make it clear that there was no question of personal, absolute, unconditional, or independent infallibility, *in sensu Bellarmini dicentis: 'definitiones de fide praecipue pendent ex traditione Apostolica et consensu Ecclesiarum.'*[2] But not all the artifices of these theological Rebeccas could turn their Jacob into an Esau. On July 11 the Bishop of Brixen, Mgr. Gasser, ascended the rostrum and delivered his magnificent speech in justification of the revised *schema*, a perfect masterpiece of clear and cogent reasoning. After stating briefly but brilliantly the various proofs of Papal infallibility, he continued:

> Before concluding the general account which I have been giving you, I must answer a very serious objection raised in this pulpit, to the effect that we wish to elevate the extreme opinion of a certain school of theologians into a dogma of the Faith. This is indeed a serious objection, and when I heard it from the lips of a distinguished and very highly respected orator, I bowed my diminished head *et oratio mea in sinu meo convertebatur*. Good heavens! do you thus

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[1] *Acta et Decreta Concilii Vaticani.* Collectio Lacensis, vol. VII, coll. 282, 286.

[2] *Acta.* Coll. Lac., coll. 378, 383.

twist and turn about our words and intentions so as to attribute to us the design of giving the opinion of a certain extreme school the dignity of a dogma, and so as to make Bellarmine, in a manner, the author of the fourth proposition in the Declaration of the Gallican clergy ? For to begin with the last point, what is the difference between the assertion which the most reverend orator fathers on Bellarmine : 'the Pope cannot define anything infallibly apart from the rest of the Bishops and without the co-operation of the Church,' and the notorious fourth article : 'in questions of faith the judgment of the Pope is not irreformable unless supported by the consent of the Church. . . .'

Turning now to the doctrine set forth in the *schema*, the commissioners are unjustly defamed on the score that they want to invest an extreme opinion, namely that of Albert Pighi, with the dignity of an article of faith. Pighi's opinion, which Bellarmine incidentally calls pious and probable, was that the Pope in his private capacity as an individual theologian could not possibly fall into nor teach heresy, though he might err through ignorance. . . . This is plain from Bellarmine's own pages where he expounds Pighi's opinion : *Probabile est pieque credi potest, summum Pontificem non solum uti Pontificem errare non posse, sed etiam ut particularem personam haereticum esse non posse, falsum aliquid contra fidem pertinaciter credendo* (De Rom. Pont., lib. IV, cap. vi). From the testimony of this passage, it is obvious that the doctrine of the *schema* is not the view of Albert Pighi nor the extreme view of any school. It is Bellarmine's view, that identical self-same one which he teaches in the place cited by the most reverend orator, and which he calls *certissimam* and *asserendam* or rather, as he says, revising his statement, *sententiam communissimam et certam*.[1]

Döllinger, who was the most conspicuous and zealous opponent of the definition, declared after his secession from the Church that 'the Vatican Council did nothing but define the views of Cardinal Bellarmine.'[2] This statement is a very true one, but not in its author's sense. The 'Bellarmine theory' and 'Bellarmine school' which he and Maret tried to minimize as being only one among many theories and schools were largely a figment of their own imaginations. Papal infallibility was just as little or as much a theory of the great Jesuit theologian as the divinity of Christ was a theory of St. Athanasius. It was the Church's belief from the beginning, proclaimed or implied by doctors and saints in every age. Robert Bellarmine's glory was to have expounded it and defended it with matchless ability before the modern world and so to have prepared the way for the encyclical *Pastor Aeternus.*[1]

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[1] *Acta.* Coll. Lac., coll. 405, 406.

[2] Döllinger und Reusch, *Die Selbstbiographie des Cardinals Bellarmin*, Bonn, 1887, p. 98. Döllinger and Acton both seemed to regard the Cardinal as a kind of personal enemy.

8. The dogma proclaimed in that great document had another very distinguished opponent in Bishop von Hefele, the learned historian of the Councils. Though he, like Maret, submitted loyally to the ruling of the Church, he was not naturally sympathetic towards the work of Bellarmine, so his estimate of it has a special importance.

> It is [he wrote] the most complete defence of the Catholic Faith especially against Protestant aggression, which has appeared up to the present day (1883) and by its erudition and courtesy has earned for its author imperishable renown.[2]

Before him Alzog had described Bellarmine as 'beyond comparison the most eminent of all the theologians of his age,'[3] and some more recent writers, not famous for their love of Jesuits or the Papacy, go, if anything, too far in their praise of the Papacy's great Jesuit defender. Thus the undiscriminating Abbé Turmel tells us, in a book of apparently vast erudition, that if we turn our thoughts towards the men who have best upheld the prerogatives of the Holy See, we shall meet immediately 'un nom qui dépasse ou plutôt écrase tous les autres, celui de Bellarmin.'[4] In Turmel's book this is certainly so. Bellarmine comes first, and the rest, nowhere; but Blessed Robert himself was never one to forget his indebtedness to other writers, nor to fail in due acknowledgments. Some of his treatises have a special section or chapter devoted to this purpose, while in them all he is most careful to give detailed references to the works of men who have helped him. The following passage is typical: 'We begin now the discussion of the first point, which is about the name and definition of the Church. I have not studied all the books which have been written on it, but I will give you a list of the more modern ones which I have read.' And then he mentions the titles, chapters, and sections of fourteen Catholic treatises on the Church.[1]

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[1] Bishop von Ketteler, who was opposed to the definition as inopportune, 'impressed several of the Fathers by his false allegations and interpretations of Bellarmine, a thing which was possible only because there were no theologians present at the time'. These words of a witness are cited by Otto Pfulf in his *Bischof von Ketteler*, Dritter Band, s. 98. Many other interesting sidelights on the attitude of Gallicans and 'infallibilists' towards Bellarmine during the Council may be found in Granderath, *Geschichte des Vat. Kon.*, III, pp. 419 sqq., *et passim.*

[2] Herder's *Kirchenlexikon*, II, 286.

[3] *Universal Church History*, Eng. tr., vol. III, p. 413.

[4] J. Turmel, *Histoire de la Théologie Positive*, t. II, ed. 3, Paris, 1916, p. x. Turmel as a writer dealt in extremes and found himself on the Index more than once. The volume mentioned professes to be a history of theology but gives little space to anybody except Bellarmine.

Again, in the preface to his controversy on the Pope he says : ' Lest any writer should complain that I have forgotten him, I hereby give warning that I am not going to enumerate all the books written in defence of the Papacy, but only such as I have been myself able to procure.' These included eleven Belgians and Germans, eight Italians, seven Spaniards, six Englishmen, one Pole, and one Greek, so there is no doubt about the international character of his apologetic. While he was a professor at the Roman College, he and Father Possevino drew up a most interesting list of Catholic authors who had already dealt with the questions on which he was lecturing. It contained no fewer than 155 names, to nearly all of which he owed some little ray of the glory which surrounds his own. Praises of these his predecessors or contemporaries are quite frequent in his pages, Cardinal Hosius, for instance, being described as ' a man deserving to be held in everlasting remembrance.' After citing the works of six theologians who had argued learnedly on the merits of the Vulgate, he continues, ' being anxious to imitate the diligence of these good men, I now proceed to prove the same point by the following arguments.' And that is his way all through. Illyricus, in one of his unpleasantest moods, called attention to Daniel's prophecy that Antichrist would shower riches upon his followers. So too does the Pope, said the Lutheran protagonist, thus giving one more proof that he is verily the man of sin.

> Yes indeed [answers Bellarmine], he showered riches, did he not, on John Eck, John Cochlaeus, John Fisher, Latomus, Driedo, Tapper, Peter Soto, and a vast number of other most learned men ? They laboured day and night to restrain the mad fury of your faction, and in reward for it all had never a single farthing from the Pope. But that did not trouble them, as their toil was for the glory of God and not for any earthly recompense.[2]

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[1] *De Ecclesia Militante*, cap. i, and cf. *De Conciliis et Ecclesia*, lib. I, cap. ii, where he names Torquemada, Gerson, Eck, Cochlaeus, Pighi, Hosius Peter Soto, Melchior Cano, etc., etc.

[2] *De Romano Pontifice*, lib. III, cap. xxi.

Bellarmine himself, then, certainly did not think that his name was going to obliterate all other names, and he was in a better position to understand the nature of his Controversies than Abbé Turmel or anybody else.

> In this present century [he advertised his first readers] numerous authors of every nation and rank have published fine books in defence of our common faith, each taking a particular subject and giving it careful treatment. The consequence is that we possess to-day several very learned and lengthy volumes on practically every point of controversy. Not many men, however, possess enough books or enjoy enough leisure to be able to gather rapidly from these varied and prolix treatises that knowledge of all the matters in debate which they need, if they are to put up a good fight for the faith as a whole. . . . Therefore it seemed desirable that the labours of the aforesaid most learned and eminent men should be co-ordinated, and set forth in such a way that all who wished might be able quickly, cheaply, and easily to obtain their necessary equipment for battle from a single armoury. . . . My aim, then, has been to treat of all the controversies separately and yet in relation to each other ; to show their points of contact and mutual dependence ; and so from them to build up one coherent, organized, and complete body of doctrine.[1]

How well he succeeded with his great enterprise the testimonies cited in these pages sufficiently prove. Throughout the Controversies his genius shows itself not so much in depth as in comprehensiveness. He had marvellously developed in him the synthetic power which catches up into victorious unity the myriad strands of the most complicated arguments. There are no knots or tangles in his pages, and no threads floating loose in the air. His eyes are always on the pattern he had invented, and the details seem to fall into place as by the kind of effortless magic that characterizes a work of art. It is this serene and unembarrassed mastery of his material that lifts the Controversies mountain high above the general level of such literature. If they be surveyed in detail many a lacuna will be found in them, many a forced conclusion and irrelevant text, and many a bit of legend masquerading as history.[2] But if we take them as a whole,

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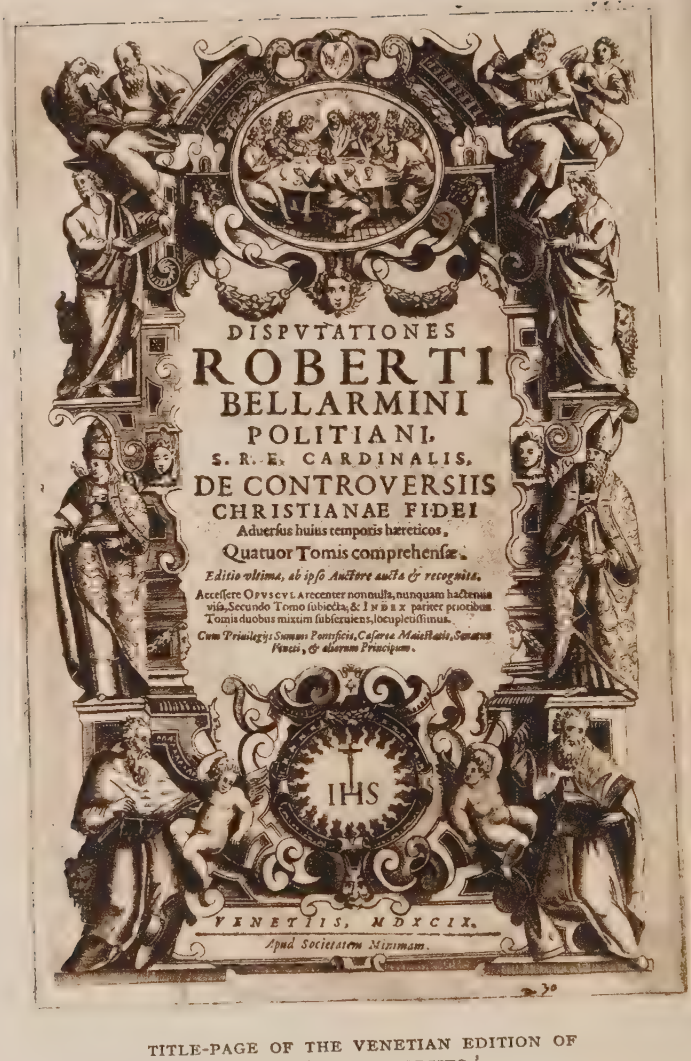
[1] *Disputationes de Controversiis*, vol. 1, *Ad Lectorem*.

[2] In 1697 Father Thyrsus Gonzalez, General of the Society of Jesus, addressed a memorial to the Holy See advocating the re-establishment of a chair of controversy in the Roman College. In this document of more than 200 years ago, it is pointed out that Cardinal Bellarmine's books, great help though they be, are no longer sufficient for the needs of the time, since the heretics had excogitated a great variety of new arguments untouched in the Controversies. Le Bachelet, *Bellarmin avant son Cardinalat*, p. 521.



DISPVTATIONES
ROBERTI
BELLARMINI
POLITIANI,
S. R. E. CARDINALIS,
DE CONTROVERSIIS
CHRISTIANAE FIDEI
Aduerſus huius temporis hæreticos,
Quatuor Tomis comprehenſæ.
Editio vltima, ab ipſo Auctore aucta & recognita.
Acceſſere OPVSCVLA recenter nonnulla, nunquam hactenus
viſa, Secundo Tomo ſubiecta; & INDEX pariter prioribus
Tomis duobus mixtim ſubſeruiens, locupletiſſimus.
*Cum Priuilegijs Summi Pontificis, Cæſareæ Maieſtatis, Senatus
Veneti, & aliorum Principum.*

VENETIIS, MDXCIX.
Apud Societatem Minimam.

TITLE-PAGE OF THE VENETIAN EDITION OF
THE 'CONTROVERSIES.'

as we take a great play or piece of music, their quality soon becomes apparent. To revert to an old analogy, they show the mingled strength, spaciousness, and harmony of the temple which was flinging its mighty dome into the skies when they were written. The Sacraments and the saints and all the economy of the supernatural life have their place in both book and basilica, and Our Lady has her privileged altar in them, and the Pope his exclusive throne. Without pressing the comparison too far, it is possible to recognize in the man who designed the Controversies some of the architectonic masterliness that went to the designing of St. Peter's. His work indeed, this time like London's St. Paul's, needs repair in many a place, having been washed and worn by centuries of criticism, but the genius that constructed it does not on that account lose much of its lustre, any more than the genius of Sir Christopher Wren does because his materials were sometimes poor and the ground on which he built happens to be finding a new level.

To sum the whole matter up and conclude this unduly prolonged chapter, the quality of Blessed Robert Bellarmine's mind which shines everywhere through his writings is its balance and sense of proportion. A healthy independence of judgment was united in him to a reverent conservatism. He taught theology in a new way, but he did not discard the old ways, nor consider them superfluous, as appeared in 1580 when his Provincial, Father Claudius Aquaviva, issued orders that the priest-students of the Roman College were to cease attending the lectures on dogmatic theology and to devote the time to their moral books instead. Two of the professors concerned determined to appeal to the General against this ruling, which in no way affected the lectures on controversy. Section 6 of their long letter of protest runs as follows:

> Germany and England are crying out for many men capable of meeting the heretics, but if such men are not well-grounded, they may easily come to grief. It is not enough for them merely to listen to controversies and cases of conscience. The controversies presuppose scholastic philosophy and theology. To educate a man as a controversialist pure and simple is to throw him into hopeless confusion. This we know from our own experience, because the controversialists of that type whom we have here at present understand hardly a word of the lectures, lacking as they do the light of scholastic theology. That discipline is more secure, and clearer in its grip of truth, and to abandon it is, as sad experience shows, to open the door to heresy.

Bellarmine's name at the foot of this document is a better clue to the character of his mind than the most eloquent of external testimonies.[1] It was not the love of argument but the love of God that had made him take up his pen. His personal credit, except in so far as it involved the interests of the Church, was a matter for which there was no room in his thoughts because they were occupied too exclusively with the cause of his Divine Master.

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[1] Le Bachelet, *Bellarmin avant son Cardinalat*, p. 123.

CHAPTER X

THE TURMOIL OF FRANCE

1. While Robert Bellarmine was peacefully pursuing the study of his Aristotle in 1562, history was being made at a hectic pace on the other side of the Alps. As he was destined himself, personally and through his books, to become involved in the struggle, it may be well to give a rapid outline of its developments. The key to the complicated story was a little independent kingdom called Navarre, which lay along the wild shores of the Bay of Biscay, with its head in France and its heels in Spain. Provocative heels they must have been, which Ferdinand of Aragon liked not to see kicking on his side of the fence. Without more ado he annexed the Spanish portion of Navarre, and forced its Queen, Catherine d'Albret, to retire towards the cold, French declivity of her native mountains. Revenge then became the object of the lady's life, and she educated her boy Henry on the lines followed by the stern matrons of Sparta and Carthage. He learned his lessons well and, when he grew up and married the French King's sister, his one great hope was that he might have a boy to carry on the tradition of revenge. However, there was only a girl named Jeanne, and when she in her turn married Antony de Bourbon, her disappointed father had the further sorrow of laying two baby grandsons in the grave.

At last in his old age he was told that Jeanne was going to be a mother for the third time, whereupon his fierce hopes revived, and he summoned the girl home from the French court that the avenger might be born on the soil of Navarre. She came in the depth of winter, and he promised her a casket of gold if she would sing a brave, national song while in labour so that her child might be a sturdy little fellow, indifferent to pain. Jeanne was a bigoted Calvinist, but she chose a hymn to Our Lady in the patois of Béarn, and as she struggled gallantly with its music, the best-beloved of all the Kings of France came into the world. The old grandfather seized the child immediately, and bore him off in triumph to his own apartments where he rubbed garlic on the baby lips and forced some strong Jurançon wine through them to brace up the heart of his treasure. Then the hapless infant was packed off to the wild storm-battered castle of Coarraze, where the scream of winds and wheeling eagles were to serve him for a lullaby. As he grew up, he was dressed in the homespun of the peasants among whom he lived, and fared as they did on bread and garlic. Their dialect was his only language, and there was not a boy among them who could beat him in a race or climb a tree or mountain more daringly.

At length the old King died, and Jeanne d'Albret ascended the throne. Her Catholic husband was killed fighting against the Huguenots in the first of the seven religious wars, after which event she was free to force her Calvinism on the people of Navarre and on her boy Henry. There was nothing of the woman about Jeanne except her name. She adopted the grand airs of her neighbour in England, though as a Béarnais noble remarked, anybody could cross her toy kingdom with a hop, skip, and jump. Catholicism was rooted out of it in a fashion more cruel and brutal than had been followed in any other country, and Henry, its future overlord, had Calvinism driven into him quite as vigorously. However, it met with but a sorry welcome in his gay and half-pagan heart. What he wanted was not a religion but a cause to champion, and even predestination could provide him with that. In 1569, after the death of Condé, he became the recognized leader of the Huguenots, and was the life and soul of their resistance in all the terrible wars which followed. His gallantry became proverbial. Wherever the danger was thickest, his white panache, the only tidy part of his accoutrement, was to be seen dancing, so that when the other flags went down his men could always rally around its feathers. Ready though he was to fight for Calvinism, he was by no means prepared to die for it, and accordingly embraced Catholicism during the massacre of St. Bartholomew.

By the Peace of Monsieur which ended the fifth religious war in 1576, the Huguenots were made various concessions that raised justifiable apprehensions in the minds of the Catholic majority. To protect themselves the better, they formed leagues and associations up and down the country with Henry, Duke of Guise, at their head. Henry, the King of France, did not like the new movement, but being powerless to do anything else, gave it, at last, his reluctant benediction. Finally, there was the third Henry, 'the man of Béarn,' who, feeling that his destiny called him to be in the opposite camp to Guise, renounced Catholicism, and once more took his place at the head of the Huguenots. The stage was set then for a very great drama, and a very great drama was soon to be enacted, for in 1584 'Monsieur,' the Duke of Anjou, died, and the man who sat on the throne of France was the last of the Valois.

Up to this time, the danger of a heretic wearing the crown of St. Louis had not seriously troubled the calculations of the Catholic leaders, but with 'Monsieur' in his grave and 'the man of Béarn,' heir-presumptive to the throne, the prospect became decidedly ominous. The League or Holy Union, which hitherto had been but a loose confederation of more or less aristocratic groups, swiftly developed into a powerful and well-organized popular movement. The Guises directed the national enthusiasm very skilfully, and with the additional aid of Spain were soon in a position to dictate terms to their vacillating King. Henry's sympathies naturally leaned towards his kinsman and namesake of Navarre, but he was compelled to repudiate him and to declare Protestantism illegal throughout France. When the Huguenot Prince heard the news, it is said that half of his moustache turned white immediately.

Meantime in Rome, Pope Sixtus V had taken the destinies of the Church into his capable hands. In the midst of his splendid administrative work at home, he kept wary eyes on the trend of foreign events, and what he saw happening in France made him anxious to the point of agony. Was the eldest daughter of the Church going the way of England, and what was to be done to prevent such an immeasurable disaster? The emissaries of the League had the answer for him pat, and so had Olivares, King Philip's haughty ambassador. Excommunicate Navarre, they said, and all will be well. But Sixtus did not want to excommunicate Navarre. Being a strong, resolute man himself, he loved strong, resolute men, and such a one he knew the Béarnais to be. However, he was deceived by the apparent union of the Catholic parties, and in order to cement it effectively issued the desired Bull in September 1585. By this document the King of Navarre and the Prince de Condé were declared heretics, and incapable of succeeding to the throne of France.

2. At this point, Robert Bellarmine returns to the scene. The Pope's Bull was attacked and repudiated, not only by the Calvinists, but by the middle party or *politiques*, who, though Catholics, stood up for the claims of Navarre. The future was to belong to this party we know, but in the tumult of the times their voices were scarcely heard, and the greatest of them, de l'Hôpital, even suffered disgrace for his tolerant opinions. Henry himself, against whom the 'thunderbolt' was directed, did not take it tamely, but according to report, contrived to have a bill posted up in Rome in which he told 'Monsieur Sixtus, self-styled Pope, saving His Holiness' what he thought about him. It is said, and it is quite probable, that the large-hearted Pontiff enjoyed this audacious sally hugely. Nevertheless his Bull, which was drafted in full accordance with the legal principles of the time, had to be defended against its traducers, and for the thankless task Robert Bellarmine was chosen. He performed it conscientiously, in that spirit of calm detachment which always guided him when he had to meddle in politics. The work was published under the pen-name of Francesco Romulus, and so impersonal was its tone that down to our own time its authorship was a matter of controversy.[1]

Disillusionment was not long in coming to the great Pope, who, like de l'Hôpital, 'had the fleur-de-lis in his heart.' His advisers had talked of peace, and there was no peace. The war of the three Henrys was reducing France to a state of anarchy, and the spectre of feudalism which it had taken hundreds of years to lay, was again out of its tomb and skrieking through the land. In these circumstances, the embarrassment of good Catholics became acute, and even the General of the Jesuits found it exceedingly difficult to keep his men in the middle way that became them. One member of the Society, Père Auger, was the confessor and devoted friend of Henry III, while another, Père Mathieu, proved so zealous in the interests of the Guises that he was nicknamed 'the Courier of the League.' In 1587 the King conceived a plan which he hoped would rid him once and for all of that hated family, and likewise of the Huguenot complication. He took the field himself at the head of a powerful army, sent the Duke de Joyeuse with a strong force against Navarre and, while directing Guise to head off the German allies of that Prince, provided him with as few reinforcements as possible.

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[1] Le Bachelet, *Bellarmin avant son Cardinalat*, p. 437.

By this Machiavellian stroke he expected that the two rival Henries would be put out of action, and France once more be at peace. But everything fell out contrary to his expectations. Navarre beat Joyeuse badly at the battle of Coutras, and in the north, Guise with his 6,000 men annihilated the 40,000 German mercenaries.

The feat of the Balafré or ' man with the gashed face,' as Guise was called, sent Catholic France wild with delight. At Rome, Pope Sixtus sang the praises of ' the new Machabeus ' in a special consistory, and granted France a jubilee in his honour. All the pulpits of the land resounded with his glory. ' Saul,' said the preachers with a sarcastic allusion to the King, ' Saul has killed his thousands, and David his tens of thousands.' All this incense stank in the royal nostrils, and every day Henry grew more and more jealous.

> He shows remarkable piety [wrote the Papal nuncio], and at the same time he detests the Holy League. He makes war on the heretics, and he is jealous of the Catholic successes. In appearance one man, nevertheless he fills two rôles in the great political drama : a king whose life is all hope, and a king whose life is nothing but alarms. He wants the Huguenots to be beaten, and yet he dreads their defeat. He wants the Catholics to win, and yet has no desire for their victory.[1]

The King at length determined to smash the League whatever it might cost him, and began with an onslaught on its Paris supporters, the ' Council of Sixteen.' These men appealed to the Balafré, who immediately repaired to the capital in spite of Henry's orders to the contrary. Then followed the *Journée des Barricades*, when the leaguers poured into the streets at the sound of the tocsin, defeated the royal forces, and compelled his Majesty to take refuge in ignominious flight. After this the situation became impossible, so the two parties opened negotiations which resulted in the King's return. By this time, however, he had his mind made up to have the Balafré assassinated, and the Duke with his brother the Cardinal de Guise were duly dispatched by soldiers of the royal bodyguard, on 28 December 1588. At the same time, Cardinal de Bourbon, the League's candidate for the succession, was thrown into prison. Henry then thought that his troubles were over, but soon found to his disgust that the blood of the Guises was the seed of a hundred new conspiracies. The entire Catholic world was in an uproar about the murders, and the King's highly uncanonical treatment of the two Cardinals would have alienated the Pope completely had not Sixtus felt that the situation was still too obscure for any definite pronouncement on his part.

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[1] Tempesti, *Storia della vita e gesti di Sisto Quinto*, vol. 1, p. 346.

The next desperate move of the baffled monarch was to throw himself into the arms of the Huguenots. An offensive and defensive alliance was negotiated between him and Navarre, whereupon they joined forces, and took the road to the rebellious city on the Seine. Just outside its walls, on 1 August 1589, the dagger of a crazy friar named Jacques Clément closed the long and chequered story of the House of Valois.[1]

Throughout all the weary struggle Pope Sixtus had but one object in view, the salvation of the Church in France. With him it was religion first and foremost, and then national interests a long way behind. Being the sovereign of a free state himself, he had the deepest sympathy for all legitimate national feelings, and saw in the sincere conversion of the Huguenot prince the ideal solution of France's difficulties. But that happy event failing, he was ready to tolerate even the dismemberment of the country, rather than witness the triumph of heresy on its soil. Olivares and the Spanish cardinals were forever dinning into his ears that the conversion of Navarre was a dream that could not possibly come true. They had their own master to serve, and that master would have found a slice of French territory decidedly convenient for the furtherance of his ambitious schemes. The aged Pontiff did not know what to think. France had two kings now, Henry IV whose blood was his best ally, and Henry's prisoner, Charles X, sheltering his claim under the purple banner of the League. The position of the Béarnais looked desperate indeed, for he had five-sixths of the country against him. With less than 10,000 men, he fell back on the coast, while Mayenne, brother of the murdered Guise, went in pursuit at the head of 30,000, boasting that he would soon 'pitch the heretic into the sea.'

3. Pope Sixtus became convinced at last that it was hopeless to look to Navarre for a solution of the Church's troubles, and so, without committing himself irrevocably to either party, decided to send a legate into France who should

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[1] Henry III had at least one true mourner. When his Jesuit friend and confessor, Père Auger, heard of the assassination, he 'was so overwhelmed that for two or three whole days he did not touch food or drink, but remained in tears all the time, praying without intermission'. Quoted from Bailly in Père Fouqueray's *Histoire de la Compagnie de Jésus en France*, t. II, p. 180.

endeavour to bring about the union of all the Catholic elements in the country. For this exceedingly delicate mission he chose a worthy cardinal named Cajetan, who had the one serious disqualification of being too pro-Spanish in his sympathies. As many thorny questions of canon law and theology were bound to arise in the course of the mission, Father Bellarmine was assigned to the Cardinal as his adviser-in-chief. That good man made no comment when told that he had to go, but in view of his ill-health and multifarious interests in Rome, it can hardly have been welcome news. His first thought as usual was to obtain the blessing of heaven on the enterprise and, at his earnest entreaty, Father Aquaviva recommended it with much warmth to the prayers of the whole Order. Happy in that fraternal support, Father Robert packed his modest belongings, and rode out of Rome in the Legate's suite on 2 October 1589. Cardinal Cajetan was instructed to visit all the princes whose courts lay along his route, so the journey to Paris was punctuated with audiences at Florence, Bologna, Turin, and other places. Travelling, especially on horse-back, was neither pleasant nor easy, as it rained in torrents most of the time, but Bellarmine, instead of dying of pneumonia as might have been expected, throve wonderfully in the wet, and gaily assured Aquaviva that he had never felt better in his life.[1] The letters that passed between those two friends while the Legation was on the road, let us see a long way into their hearts. There is real tenderness in the General's plainly spoken solicitude for the safety of his absent son, and on Bellarmine's side, an answering affection that put reassuring gaiety into his phrases at the worst of times.

The General's anxiety was not in the least ill-founded. Danger lurked at every bend of the road, for Navarre had decided to capture the Legation, Cardinal and all, if he showed the slightest disposition to parley with the League. This he certainly did show,[2] but all the same, Lyons was reached on November 9 without any notable mishap. The distinguished

[1] Le Bachelet, *Bellarmin avant son Cardinalat*, p. 247.

[2] When passing through Bologna, Cajetan had learned from his predecessor Morosini that the sympathies of the French people were even then moving away from the League, and no sooner had he put foot on the soil of France than he found by experience that the report was in no way exaggerated. To go to the capital was definitely to take the side of the League, yet in spite of strong representations that he should remain in some neutral city, such as Avignon, he refused to abandon that project and thus became publicly known as an enemy of Navarre.

visitors received a civic welcome, and were entertained at a magnificent banquet which the chroniclers say resembled the fine feasts of ancient Greece and Rome. Bellarmine is mentioned by name as having been one of the guests. His fame had gone before him to France, and there were crowds of simple and gentle folk in the towns through which he passed who coveted the distinction of being able to say that they had shaken him by the hand. Judging by the stories they had heard and by the size of his books, they had built up a fancy portrait of him in their imaginations. He was to be the Controversies made flesh, an awe-inspiring, majestic figure of a man, with an eagle eye and the aloof grandeur of a prophet. They thought at first that there must have been some mistake when a priest very like their own homely *abbés* and *vicaires*, and in stature less than man's average inches, came out to greet them so friendlily. Can this possibly be the great Bellarmine? they whispered to one another in astonishment.[1]

Meanwhile, the Béarnais was making love to France in the west. After the brilliant victory at Arques, he scribbled his famous mocking note to a duke who had been tardy in coming to his assistance: 'Hang yourself, brave Crillon; we fought at Arques and you weren't there.' Then, reinforced by a contingent of English and Scots, he moved on with the strides of a conqueror, sweeping the forces of the League before him. Each province, city, and village through which he passed had a party to welcome him and a party to defy him. The country was torn to pieces, and everywhere there was blood and slaughter, ghastly disease, famine, and despair. It was only at the end of November that Cardinal Cajetan dared take the road once more, and then he was unable to proceed beyond Dijon. The allies of Navarre were skirmishing around Paris, and they knew by this time that the Legate was their sworn foe. He was not a diplomatist, and while adhering conscientiously to the letter of his instructions, he entirely ignored their spirit. The situation had changed greatly since his departure from Rome, but he made no effort to adapt his policy to the new developments, though he was aware that the Pope's sympathies were veering round to King Henry. His Spanish blood was too much for him and, as the days went by, he grew increasingly troubled about the reception he might expect from the fiery Sixtus, if he were to bungle the negotiations. Once, when on the road, Bellarmine narrates that he asked him anxiously how long he thought the Pope was likely to live. ‘ He will die this very year ’ (1590), answered Robert with much assurance, but Cajetan would not believe him. Later, at Paris, the poor, worried Cardinal returned to the question : ‘ So you really think he will go to Heaven this year ? ’ ‘ I am sure of it, your Lordship.’ ‘ Oh, but you cannot be sure of it ; I feel certain he is going to live quite a long time yet.’ ‘ No, your Lordship, he will be dead before the end of this year.’ So they argued, much, it would seem, to the comfort of the ambassador’s uneasy mind.[1]

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[1] Fuligatti, *Vita*, p. 97.

The difficulties of the journey are vividly illustrated by another reminiscence of Bellarmine :

> When we were at Dijon in Burgundy, and the Cardinal was thinking of pursuing his route to Paris, we were suddenly informed that the Seigneur de Tavines, with a thousand horsemen, was waiting in ambush for us at a fork in the road, his purpose being to capture the Cardinal, kill a certain number of us, and carry off the rest prisoners. But we were also told by other informants that this rumour was a fiction, concocted in order to frighten the Legate into staying where he was. On the morning when we were all due and ready to depart, his Lordship, being unable to discover the truth by any human means, secretly dropped two little pieces of paper into the chalice, when he had finished his Mass. On one was the word ‘ Go,’ and on the other ‘ Do not go.’ Then commending the whole affair to God, he drew out one of the folded notes, and opening it, saw that it bore the words : ‘ Do not go.’ A short time afterwards, we learned that the story of the ambush was true in every detail.[2]

During the night of 1 January 1590 the stables of the inn at Dijon where the Legate was lodging were set on fire, and thirty-eight of his horses killed or rendered useless. However, he and his suite were not held up very long, as the Duke of Lorraine sent a strong escort of 2,000 lances to conduct them on their way. At Troyes the soldiers went on strike for their pay, so there was another enforced halt until the Duke of Mayenne came to the rescue with a fresh escort. At last, on 21 January 1590, Cajetan made his solemn entry into the capital, acclaimed by an immense crowd which moved along with him to Notre Dame, shouting: 'Long live the Pope! Long live the Papacy! Long live the Church of Rome!'

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[1] *Autobiography*, n. xxv.

[2] *Autobiography*, n. xxv. The gentleman named Tavines, in this extract, has been christened Tavannes by nearly all the writers on Bellarmine. It is not a matter of much importance, but it will do no harm to point out that the famous Seigneur de Tavannes had been twenty-seven years in his grave at the time when he is supposed to have held up our hero on the road to Paris. Nor was it the Vicomte de Tavannes who, as Frizon’s vivid narrative would have it, ‘ étoit à la tête d’un corps de cavalerie, fort résolu de ne pas manquer une si belle proie et d’en faire un présent au Roy de Navarre ’ (*Vie du Cardinal Bellarmin*, 1708, p. 132). The Vicomte was then a field-marshal in the army of the League, and one of the Béarnais’ bitterest enemies. Cf. *Mémoires de Gaspar de Saulx, Seigneur de Tavannes*. Collection Petitot, t. XXIII, p. 38.

4. These plaudits, unfortunately, were very deceptive. Even in Paris, which had been all along loyal to the League, considerable numbers had gone over to the rival flag. Many French prelates followed suit, and two Cardinals, de Vendôme and de Lénoncourt, invited these new recruits of Navarre to an assembly at Tours on 10 February 1590. It seemed an ominous move, inasmuch as it was undertaken without the Pope's sanction, and rumour whispered that the intention of the bishops was to set up an independent French Patriarchate. Bellarmine, for whom politics as such had only a very academic interest, was all attention when the fortunes of religion were at stake. This little wisp of cloud on the episcopal horizon caused him the gravest anxiety, which he expressed in a letter to his friend Father Cresswell, a Londoner who was then the Rector of the English College, Rome:

> I thank your Reverence for having so kindly sent me an account of the martyrdom of your four holy countrymen. Their constancy has been an inspiration and comfort to us all, and we shall have the story of it translated into French and published soon, in order to encourage the people of this nation. For things have come to such a pass here that unless God quickly intervenes, I fear greatly that France will end up in the same way as England. I was so glad to get news of Father Henry Garnet, a man for whom I have always had the warmest affection. It is my firm conviction that the eventual reward of all his unsparing efforts for the good of souls will be the crown of martyrdom. Should this happen, I hope to have a good advocate in Heaven, but being older than he is, and having been for a considerable time his spiritual director, perhaps the summons will come to myself before it does to him. As for the third volume of the Controversies, I am most anxious to get it out, but have to go very slowly for many reasons, and as you know, I have lost four good months in the saddle. Will you please give Cardinal Allen my warm greetings. From Paris, 19 February 1590.[1]

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[1] Le Bachelet, *Bellarmin avant son Cardinalat*, pp. 258–259.

In order to avert any evil consequences that might arise out of the suggested synod at Tours, Cardinal Cajetan determined to proscribe it altogether, and directed Bellarmine to draw up an encyclical letter stating and justifying his action. A copy of this document was then sent to each of the Bishops of France, with the happiest results:

Henry, Cardinal Cajetan, Chancellor of the Holy Roman Church, Legate *a latere* in the Kingdom of France of His Holiness Our Lord, the Pope, and of the Sacred Apostolic See, to all the Archbishops, Bishops and Abbots of the said Kingdom, health and benediction in the Lord.

We have been informed, most reverend Fathers, that some, yea perchance all of you, have received an invitation to the city of Tours, that you may there deliberate concerning the instruction in the orthodox faith and the reconciliation to the Catholic Church of Henry de Bourbon, who has assumed to himself the title, King of the French. This project, though it may appear on the surface piously intended, can for many reasons be accounted dangerous, and altogether subversive of ecclesiastical discipline.

For, in the first place, you have been called together by men who possess no authority to issue such a summons to bishops, especially as an Apostolic Legate is now on the soil of France. To him it properly belongs to convoke a national synod, should the necessity for such a step arise. Furthermore, you are invited to a city in which it will not be possible for you to delay without peril to your souls, seeing that its sovereign ruler is a man whom the Apostolic See has excommunicated by name. Finally, and this is the principal objection, you are invited to settle an affair for which your help is not needed, and cannot be given without serious sin on your part. For if Henry de Bourbon merely seeks to be instructed in the Catholic and Roman Faith, what necessity is there to convoke a synod of bishops for the purpose? Why should so many prelates be put to inconvenience? Could not the work be done with ease by the learned priests and preachers who are to be found in Tours? For such a work, it is not authority that is needed, but education, and education even of the average kind would be quite sufficient. Besides, Bourbon can scarcely be ignorant of the faith of the Roman Church, since, at one period, he professed it.

If, on the other hand, it is not the simple instruction of the Prince you are asked to undertake, but, as seems very likely, the discussion of questions in debate between the Roman Church and the Calvinists, what else does this mean but the renewal of conversations which were closed once and for all by the Council of Trent? Is not this to overthrow the authority of the Council which condemned the errors of Calvinism long ago, is it not the negation of those dogmas of faith which France, no less than the rest of the Christian world, venerates and professes, is it not, in a word, the giving of victory to heresy and, as St. Hilary says, the turning of religion to derision?

You see, therefore, how unnecessary or how dangerous the projected synod would be. If any man, truly and heartily hating error in belief, desires and requests to be instructed in the true faith, let him have recourse to Catholic theologians, to good men learned in the law of God who will read and expound to him the decrees of the aforesaid Council of Trent, or the Roman Catechism, or the profession of faith drawn up according to the decisions of the Council by Pope Pius IV. For this there is no need of a synod or meeting of bishops.

We know that these arguments will not be misunderstood by men of your prudence; we have not the least doubt of your genuine faith and piety, and we are very confident that no priest of Our Lord would wish to attend this synod. Nevertheless, brethren, we have felt it incumbent upon us, in virtue of our office, to warn you by letter. Should any be found disposed to act otherwise, we, with the authority given us by the Apostolic See, hereby forbid them to attend this synod. All bishops are strictly prohibited from going to Tours, and from meeting in any assembly. If such should be held, we protest plainly that we shall not recognize its legitimacy, and we declare that all its acts and proceedings will be invalid and worthless. Moreover, we warn bishops who might be rash enough to take part in such a synod that they will run grave risk of excommunication and deposition.

Given at Paris, in the Bishop's Palace, Henry Cardinal Cajetan, Legate.[1]

This firm letter eased the apprehensions of the Catholics in one direction, but those of them at least who lived in Paris had soon good cause for fears of another kind. On March 1 the Legate attended High Mass at the Augustinian Church. After the Gospel, many of the city's most prominent officials took an oath before him that they would never submit to the Béarnais. A few days later, news arrived that Mayenne, the head of the League, had been utterly routed at the battle of Ivry, and that the Béarnais was marching on the capital. On the eve of the great victory, his army, which was numerically much inferior to Mayenne's, had split up into two portions, one going off to confession, and the other to be exhorted by fiery Calvinist ministers. The Legate's eyes were turned too piously towards Spain for him to see the significance of that divided parade. During the battle, Henry's lovers, Catholic and Calvinist, were in a torment of anxiety, for wherever the fighting was fiercest, there he would surely be. When he occasionally emerged from the wild whirl, they could scarcely recognize him, as he was covered with blood and dust from top to toe. Four days afterwards, he was playing tennis and cracking jokes like the merriest *roi-fainéant* that ever sat on a throne. Indeed, except for his nominal Calvinism, and a too great fondness for dice and fair ladies, Henry was a man after Robert Bellarmine's own heart. The most comradely of kings, his gaiety, heroism, wit, and tenderness were precisely the qualities that endeared the homely, reddish-bearded figure of the Legate's theologian to all who knew him. He saw the Béarnais in the flesh at the beginning of April, as he was taken on a mission of peace to his tent,[1] but he has not left any record of the visit. All we know is that Henry, as King of France, counted Bellarmine among his friends, and wanted him made Pope at a later date in his history.

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[1] Le Bachelet, *Bellarmin avant son Cardinalat*, pp. 255–257.

5. Few events in the chronicle of the world's disasters were such a pathetic combination of horror and heroism as the siege of Paris by Henry of Navarre. Every historian who has written of it goes back to the siege of Jerusalem by Titus for a parallel, and that they do so with good reason may be seen by glancing through the memoirs of Pierre de l'Estoile, an eyewitness of the tragedy. There were more than 220,000 people locked up in the city, and not enough food to last beyond a month, even with the strictest rationing. At the end of that period, the starving thousands were compelled to adopt expedients such as the dreadful one suggested by the Spanish Ambassador, which was to dig up the corpses in the cemeteries, grind their bones into a kind of flour, and bake it, mixed with water, into cakes. Worse even than that, frantic mothers are reported to have devoured their babies.[2]

> It was piteous beyond the possibility of expression [writes another witness] to see the poor people waste away, and fall down dying of hunger in the hospitals, on the refuse heaps, and in the middle of the streets. Their bodies became all bloated and swollen, as if they were suffering from dropsy. Did a wretched dog dare to show its nose in the open, they were after it at once with lassoes and ropes, to catch and make a meal of it. These hunts were a common feature of the city's life, but many people preferred to stay at home and feed on cats.

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[1] De l'Estoile, *Mémoires*. Collection Petitot, t. XLVI, avril 1590.
[2] *L.c.*, t. II, p. 49.

At last, even the dogs and cats had to be rationed. Their owners were obliged to surrender them to the ecclesiastical food-controller, who managed by this means to keep a large section of the populace alive for a fortnight. The Duchess of Montpensier, being the sister of Mayenne, was exempted from the ruling, and though she was offered golden chains and rings to the value of two thousand crowns for her poodle, she refused to part with him, but not, it is regrettable to record, for any sentimental reasons. 'I shall need him for my own table soon,' was her answer. De l'Estoile, who tells this story, saw a poor man eating cart-grease one day, and questioning him, learnt that for a whole week he, his wife, and three little children had had no other nourishment but that foul stuff. By further investigations, the Diarist discovered that half the poor people were living on it. Before the end of July, 30,000 of them were corpses.[1]

Bellarmine, of course, fared as badly as everybody else, and perhaps worse, on account of his ill-health and his habit of giving things away. When Aquaviva sent him six hundred scudi for his private expenses, he immediately made a present of the entire sum to the Paris Jesuits.[2] What he endured may be guessed from the typically laconic paragraph in which he describes the siege:

> We remained in Paris from January 20 until the beginning of September, during which time we did practically nothing, but suffered a very great deal. When the King of Navarre beat Mayenne on March 12, we were all terrified, but his Majesty being unwilling to destroy and ravage so fine a city, preferred a siege to an assault. So he cast his trenches about us, and our food supplies failing, we began to have a very miserable time. A sort of dog-broth, boiled in pots, used to fetch quite a good price. The Spanish Ambassador once made us a splendid present, to wit a haunch of his own charger, that he had slaughtered for food.[3]

In spite of all its sufferings, the spirit of the beleaguered city remained unbroken. The Franciscans, Dominicans, Capuchins, and Carmelites worked themselves to death, keeping up the courage of their flocks. They were the League's sturdiest and most devoted allies, and had it not been for them, Paris must soon have hauled down its colours. They preached terrific sermons against the invader, and organized warlike processions that sent the starved populace into ecstasies of enthusiasm. The Royalist writers have made fun of these manœuvres, de l'Estoile, for instance, remarking sarcastically that the good fathers seemed to think that religion consisted of dying by starvation, but no one with a shred of human sympathy in his heart can fail to pay a tribute to their magnificent heroism. The Jesuits, by Aquaviva's express instructions, did not preach against Navarre, but they and their guest Bellarmine took a leading part in all the non-political activities of the city, the processions, the public macerations, the long hours of prayer before the Blessed Sacrament at dead of night, and the unceasing attendance on sick and dying. During one of the processions, Bellarmine narrowly escaped leaving his bones by the Seine. It was on June 3, de l'Estoile tells us :

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[1] *Mémoires*, juillet, 1590.

[2] Le Bachelet, *Bellarmin avant son Cardinalat*, p. 269.

[3] *Autobiography*, n. xxvi.

> Mgr. Rose, the Bishop of Senlis, marched at the head of the procession as its commandant and captain-general. After him followed the clergy, walking four abreast. Then came the Priors of the Carthusians and *Feuillants* with their monks, and behind them, the four mendicant orders with an array of school-children. Each of the religious superiors carried a crucifix in one hand and a halberd in the other, while their several subjects bore arquebuses, partisans, daggers, and various other kinds of weapons which their neighbours had lent them. They had their habits tucked up and their hoods down, and several of them wore casques, corselets, and petrinals. Hamilton, the Scotch curé of St. Cosmas, acted as sergeant, and drilled them along the streets, now halting the column that a hymn might be sung, and now giving the signal to march again. Sometimes, too, he commanded them to fire off their muskets. The whole city flocked together to see this new spectacle . . . and the Legate came also. Now it fell out that one of these new soldiers, who was doubtless unaware that his musket was loaded with ball, wanted very much to salute the Legate as he rode by in his carriage with Panigarol, the Jesuit Bellarmino, and other Italians. This good man accordingly fired his gun point-blank into the carriage and shot the Cardinal's almoner dead, whereupon the Cardinal bade his coachman gallop home in hot haste, the people meantime remarking that the said almoner was lucky indeed to have been killed on so holy an occasion.[1]

It was not by any will of his own that Bellarmine found himself, the only Jesuit, in that bizarre procession. Wherever the Legate went, he had to go, but as far as was compatible with courtesy, he kept well in the background on such occasions. Once, during a consultation on some political question,

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[1] *Mémoires*. Collection Petitot, t. XLVI, pp. 52–53.

Cajetan noticed that his theologian was quietly slipping out of the room. 'You are not ill, are you, Father Bellarmine?' he asked. 'Oh no, your Lordship,' said the fugitive turning back, 'but as I was sent to France to give advice only on religious matters, I do not think I would be justified in taking part in such a discussion as that which now occupies you.'[1] Casaubon, the famous editor of classical texts, accused Bellarmine in 1611 of being, during his stay in France, 'the chief torch, patron, and instigator of the wild public demonstrations connected with the conspiracy called the League.'[2] Casaubon wrote this after he had sold his soul to the King of England, who detested the Jesuit Cardinal, so his words are not deserving of much respect. Bellarmine, in fact, maintained a singularly prudent reserve throughout all the tedious, turbulent negotiations, and his neutrality must have cost him a great deal, because his sincere love and admiration for Cardinal Cajetan would naturally have inclined him to be a vigorous supporter of that prelate's prejudices in favour of the League. Cajetan, he wrote in the preface to the last volume of the Controversies, 'was a man of such nobility, goodness, wisdom, courage, generosity, charm, learning, and ability, that by general consent the Holy See could not have chosen anyone better fitted for the exceedingly dangerous and difficult business of the Legation.' This fact, however, did not lure the Cardinal's loyal counsellor from the narrow path marked out for him by his superiors. Pierre Séguier, one of the most prominent officers of the party opposed to the Béarnais, said that there was more true wisdom in Father Bellarmine's reserve than in all the smart diplomacy of Mendoza, the Spanish Ambassador.[3]

At the beginning of May 1590, the heads of the League consulted the Sorbonne as to whether it might ever be lawful for Catholics to recognize Henry of Navarre. The answer of the Faculty was a decided no, and that even if Henry were to renounce heresy and be absolved by the Pope. Those who aided him or had any dealings with him were guilty *ipso facto* of mortal sin, said the theologians.[4] Three months of the siege took a good deal of its *bravura* out of this rather unwarranted reply. The theologians in a humbler mood requested the Legate to advise them 'whether in view of the condition to which Paris was reduced, the penalty of excommunication would be incurred by prelates who approached the King of Navarre with the object of converting him, or at least, of obtaining better conditions for the Catholics.' Cajetan immediately submitted the matter to four of his advisers, namely Panigarola, Bishop of Asti, Viceo, an Italian Jesuit, Tirrie, a Scottish one, and Bellarmine. Panigarola and Viceo were all for the Sorbonne's opinion, but Bellarmine talked them round, and their unanimous final answer was that the prelates would not incur any ecclesiastical censure nor commit sin by undertaking such a negotiation.[1]

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[1] Fuligatti, *Vita*, p. 99.
[2] *Epistolae*, Rotterdam, 1709, n. 730.
[3] Fuligatti, *Vita*, p. 99; Frizon, *Vie du Cardinal Bellarmin* (1708), p. 136.
[4] De l'Estoile, *Mémoires*, may 1590.

The Ambassador of Spain was extremely annoyed when he heard of the decision, but Cardinal de Gondi and the Archbishop of Lyons left him to his tantrums, and proceeded to the camp of Navarre. It was the first move towards peace, and it was due in large measure to the broad human sympathies and theological realism of Blessed Robert Bellarmine. Peace, it is true, was still in the distant future, but though the siege went on, the old intransigent attitudes began at this time to soften gradually into that common endeavour after unity which at last brought about the conversion of the King and the pacification of France.

6. Bellarmine's *rôle* in the exciting story was a very quiet and unobtrusive one. He preached a sermon of comfort to the poor people every day, and did all in his power to help his brother Jesuits, who were in a more difficult position than perhaps anybody in the city.[2] They had a large boys' school there which numbered on its register two hundred boarders from the provinces, in addition to four hundred day scholars. In order to meet the demands of all these hungry mouths, which unquestionably had the first claim on the charity of the school authorities, the fathers did not surrender their carefully-husbanded stock of provisions when the famine came. No fair-minded man could condemn them, but nevertheless a storm of obloquy broke over their heads. In their darkest hour, Bellarmine, careless of name and fame, made their cause his own, and went with the Rector, Father James Tirrie, to face the insults of 'Monsieur le prévost des marchands.'[3] It was very like him. The bigger boys of this College, as well as the Jesuit lay-brothers, took an active part in

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[1] *Mémoires*, aoust 1590.

[2] Maimbourg, *Histoire de la Ligue*, p. 416.

[3] De l'Estoile, *Mémoires*, 26 juin 1590.

the defence of Paris, and that the fathers also were not averse from holding a gun is evident from the question which a group of them, including Bellarmine, addressed to the General at the worst period of the siege: 'Is it permissible and proper for the fathers of the Society to take up arms in the defence of the city against the heretics, especially as the other religious orders are doing so with everybody's approval?' Aquaviva's prudent answer was that the only arms which priests ought to lift up were flesh and blood ones, in imitation of Moses, but he did not entirely forbid the use of the other kind,[1] and it was in fact to ten stalwart members of the Society that the capital owed its eventual salvation. Early in September Navarre learned that the Dukes of Mayenne and Parma were advancing to the relief of the city, and marched away to meet them. They refused battle, so Henry on September 10 suddenly retraced his steps, hoping to find the besieged people off their guard. To his annoyance, however, the tocsin blared out on the still night air, and the Leaguers swarmed from their beds to the walls. Henry bade his men keep very quiet, with the result that the watchers, tiring of their vigil, went home, believing the alarm to have been a mistake. Only the Jesuit brothers and a handful of soldiers remained at their posts. About four o'clock in the morning they heard sounds, as if ladders were being placed against the walls, and one of the brothers immediately rushed back into the city shouting at the top of his voice: 'To arms! To arms!' Meantime, the others engaged with the enemy, and succeeded by pushing over the ladders in keeping them at bay until help arrived. That was the end of the siege of Paris. On the following morning Navarre marched away for good, and the ladders captured by the Jesuit brothers were taken in triumph to the College of Clermont, where they remained on exhibit as war trophies for a long time.[2]

Robert Bellarmine's main occupation during all these sad, heroic days has not yet been mentioned. A French Jesuit named Jean Lorin, who had occasion to visit him very frequently, tells about it. 'No matter what hour of the day or night I came,' this man wrote, 'I always found him on his knees, praying for France.'[3] When not thus engaged, or visiting the sick, he used to spend his time browsing among the manuscripts of the Paris libraries, for not even starvation could kill the scholar in him. In the preface to his book on the ‘ Seven Words ’ he champions the opinion that Our Lord was fastened to the Cross by four nails and not by three. After quoting some authorities for that view, he continues : ‘ I, for my part, have seen in the Royal Library at Paris some very ancient manuscripts of the Gospels which contained many pictures of Christ crucified, and these all had the four nails.’ The poet too survived, and he composed, during the siege, a great number of songs and hymns which he afterwards destroyed.[1] He even made an attempt to learn French, but soon gave it up as too difficult an accomplishment for his possessing. A few weeks before his death in 1621, he expostulated half-jokingly with a friend named Jean Arnoux, for writing to him in that language :

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[1] Fouqueray, *Histoire*, etc., t. II, p. 239.

[2] *Discours Véritable du Siège de Paris*, p. 83.

[3] Bartoli, *Vita*, p. 152. Lorin became well known as a Scripture scholar.

> My dear Father, I couldn’t read or understand a word of your French letter. When I was twiddling my thumbs in Paris during the blockade of that city by your King, I tried hard to learn the French language. But I could make no headway at all with it. This must have been on account of my advancing years[2] because, when young at Louvain, I picked up Hebrew without any help whatever, and moreover taught the same to one of our scholastics in the space of a week. . . . So I hereby beg your Reverence to write to me next time in Latin. You will thus save me from having to go in search of an interpreter. . . .[3]

The raising of the siege did not bring much consolation to the Legate and his suite. One morning, at the beginning of September, they noticed a sealed letter lying on the table in the hall. That was a rare occurrence in such troubled times, and consequently nearly everybody had a furtive peep at the envelope. It was from Rome and addressed to Cajetan, and before he opened it, Bellarmine informs us, there was a lively discussion among the others as to what news it might contain :

> The general opinion was that it contained bad news, because, as we knew already, Pope Sixtus was angry with the Cardinal and his secretary, and also with myself on account of a proposition in

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[1] *Autobiography*, n. iii.

[2] He was just forty-eight !

[3] Fuligatti, *Epistolae familiares*, clxxxiv, p. 415.

> my books which denied that the Pope was the immediate and sovereign master of the whole world.[1]

While the discussion was going on in the hall, Bellarmine entered and picked up the letter as the others had done. After looking at it for a few seconds, he said: 'I wonder, Fathers, whether you know what is inside?' 'No,' they answered, 'we do not.' 'Well, it is the death of Pope Sixtus.' Then they all burst out laughing at what they considered Father Bellarmine's little joke, and while they laughed, the Cardinal's secretary came to take the letter to him. A few minutes later the Cardinal himself appeared in the doorway: 'Gentlemen, the Pope is dead,' he announced.[2] What was it, a good guess, an intuition, or a supernatural prophecy? All the biographers argue, and some of them argue with heat,[3] that Bellarmine's numerous forecasts were supernatural, but he attributed them himself to a certain shrewd power he had of putting two and two together. Perhaps we might venture to suggest that he knew better than his biographers, and that he was not one to make light of genuinely supernatural gifts, as he often did of his supposed prophecies.

The letter which apprised Cardinal Cajetan of the death of Sixtus also summoned him to the conclave for the election of the Pope's successor. Accordingly, on September 24, the journey home began, and it was to prove for Bellarmine a worse experience than anything in the siege.

> At Meaux [he tells us] I fell very dangerously ill. That city was then being ravaged by a deadly form of dysentery, which almost invariably made an end of its victims. I caught this disease the very first night of our stay, and was also stricken with a most dreadful fever, so that I could not swallow a morsel of nourishment or get a moment of rest. The Cardinal delayed his departure for a day, and then, while consulting with his suite as to what had best be done with me, God put the kindly thought into his heart not to leave me there, but to take me with him by some means or other. So he had a litter made ready, and directed that I should be hoisted into it. By the goodness of God, as soon as I left that city I began to get better, and at the end of eight days, during which time I

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[1] *Autobiography*, n. xxvii. Crétineau-Joly, in his *History of the Society of Jesus* (vol. II, p. 275), relates that a Roman Jesuit named Blondo was arrested and put in prison by Pope Sixtus because he had preached a sermon in praise of Cardinal Cajetan!

[2] *Summarium*, n. 25, par. 19–20; cf. *Autobiography*, n. xxvii.

[3] Cf. Couderc, *Le Vénérable Cardinal Bellarmin*, Paris, 1893, t. I, p. 165.

made my journey sometimes lying down and sometimes sitting up in my couch, I was completely restored to health.[1]

The homeward itinerary was by Rheims, Verdun, Toul, Nancy, through Alsace to Bâle and Lucerne, and thence by the St. Gothard into Italy. On October 5 the Legate learned that a new Pope, Urban VII, had already been elected and laid in his grave, so he hurried on alone, and reached Rome on October 29, just a fortnight before Bellarmine and the others.

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[1] *Autobiography*, n. xxviii.

CHAPTER XI

PRINCES AND PEOPLES

1. Bellarmine's most memorable pages are not those which deal learnedly with the great mysteries of the Catholic Faith. His fine defence of Church, Saints, and Sacraments did, indeed, draw upon him the shafts of innumerable Reformation doctors, but the biggest hubbub of all, not only in the Protestant camp, but among influential sections of his own co-religionists, was created by a few quiet, almost incidental chapters 'On Laymen or Seculars,' and 'On the Temporal Power of the Pope.' While much else that he wrote has been forgotten or written better, the chapters dealing with the origin of civil authority and the relation of the Holy See to the secular State, are still the subject of much argument and conflicting criticism. In order to understand the continual controversies in which his later life was passed, and the fierce opposition to his beatification for hundreds of years after his death, it is necessary to study his teaching on these matters in some detail. That teaching is often misrepresented in modern books. Thus Dr. F. J. C. Hearnshaw, Professor of medieval history in the University of London, wrote in 1926:

> A third view [of the relation between Church and State] was that with which the great Jesuit publicists—such as Mariana, Bellarmine, Suarez—were specially associated. They abandoned the medieval and essentially pagan conception of the single and indivisible *Respublica Christiana*, and reverted to the view of the New Testament, the Early Fathers, and St. Augustine, viz., that there are two separate and distinct societies—a *Civitas Dei* and a *Civitas Terrena*; that the *Civitas Dei* or Catholic Church is divine in origin and organization, and inherently the higher of the two; and that the *Civitas Terrena* or national state is human in origin, a mere creature of contract, deriving such scanty authority as it possesses simply from the sanction of sinful men.[1]

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[1] *Social and Political Ideas of some great Thinkers of the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries:* A Series of Lectures delivered at King's College, University of London, during the session 1925–1926. Edited by F. J. C.

It will be instructive to read in conjunction with this passage Bellarmine's first of many pronouncements on the subject in question :

> Political power in general, without reference to particular forms of it such as Monarchy, Aristocracy or Democracy, has its immediate origin from God alone. This is so because such power is a necessary corollary of the nature of man, and consequently must have its sanction from Him who made that nature. Man is essentially a social being. The brute beasts are so guided by instinct that each one is sufficient unto itself, but man has need of so many things that it is quite impossible for him to live in independence. The animals are born clothed and armed, and endowed with faculties that enable them without any instructor to build their homes, seek their food, and even be their own physicians. Man, on the other hand, comes into the world naked, homeless, foodless, and, in fact, in want of everything. Though he has a pair of hands and a head with which to devise means for his comfort, the devising takes a long time, so long, indeed, that no one man could possibly provide unassisted for his individual needs. The consequence of all this is that we must willy-nilly live in company, and help one another. Furthermore, even if individual men were able to satisfy their homeliest needs without the assistance of their fellows, they would not be able alone to protect themselves from the attacks of wild beasts and robbers. And supposing they could in the strength of their own arms keep all enemies at bay, they would still remain savages unacquainted with wisdom, justice, and so many other virtues for the exercise of which their wills and reasons were principally given them. For sciences and arts take a long time to flower, and moreover would never have developed without the culture of many men. As for justice, its practice is impossible outside society, seeing that it is a virtue which regulates the dealings of a man with men. Finally, why were human beings endowed with the gifts of speech and hearing if they were not intended to live in society ?
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> Aristotle therefore rightly observes that man is by nature a social animal, and that if any man is to lead an absolutely solitary life he must be either a beast or a god. . . . Now if human nature is built for society, it is also most assuredly built to have a ruler and be ruled. For no multitude of men could possibly keep together for long unless there be one in the midst of them to maintain their unity, and see to the common interests of all. It is just the same as in our own persons. If there were not a soul in each

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Hearnshaw, M.A., LL.D., London, 1926, p. 35. Archdeacon Lilley's essay on Suarez in this volume is entirely sympathetic, and notwithstanding one or two minor mistakes affords a useful corrective to the Editor's easy-going generalizations.

of us to keep together and control the various organs and faculties of which we are composed, these would all straightway fall apart. Where there is no governor the people shall fall, says the Book of Proverbs. Then again, we do not give the name society to any kind of human group, however scattered or confused, but only to an orderly multitude. Now what else is order but a certain series of inferiors and superiors? and consequently if there is to be society at all there must be governors too. The power which such governors wield does not depend on the consent of human wills, for whether they like it or not, men and women must be ruled by some one unless they wish to see the utter destruction of their race. The origin of political power, then, is rooted in human nature itself, and consequently proceeds immediately from God who is the Author of that nature. He that resisteth the power, says St. Paul, resisteth the ordinance of God.[1]

Bellarmine, as Professor Hearnshaw remarked, did indeed revert to the view of the New Testament and St. Augustine, but he did not find in those sources the contemptuous estimates of civil authority which he is supposed to have found. The opponents he had chiefly in view were those sixteenth-century anarchists, the Anabaptists, who taught that 'the false Christ had in his Church, kings, princes, magistrates, and swords, but that the true Christ tolerated nothing of the kind.'[2] Against them he first proved his point by a long series of carefully-commented texts from both Old and New Testaments. Then he turned to the witness of Christian antiquity, and pointed out that St. Augustine had devoted practically the whole of two books in his *De Civitate Dei* to proving that political power is immediately from God.[3] The Anabaptists had alleged a passage from St. Gregory the Great (*Moral.*, lib. XXI, cap. xi) which seemed to imply that all men were born equal, and that the hierarchical constitution of society was the result of sin. Not so, answers Blessed Robert. St. Gregory was not speaking of political authority *simpliciter*, when he asserted that it was the result of sin, but of political authority as it is often found in concrete circumstances, dependent, namely, on force and fear. Moreover, when the

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[1] *De Membris Ecclesiae. Liber tertius de Laicis sive Saecularibus.* Cap. v et vi.

[2] *Antitheses Christi veri et falsi*, no. 7. Albae Juliae, 1568.

[3] St. Augustine does not maintain any one consistent theory on Church and State in the *De Civitate Dei*. That great treatise was written at different times and under stress of changing experiences. In the same century Pope St. Gelasius proclaimed authoritatively the divine origin of political power.

Saint says that all men are equal by nature, and that it is only because sin has rendered them unequal that one man must needs be ruled by another, he does not mean that men are naturally equal in wisdom or grace, but only in their essence, and as individuals of the human species. ‘ From such equality it is rightly concluded that one man ought not to be ruled despotically (*dominari*) by another as beasts are ruled by men, but only in a constitutional and agreed manner, according to law and reason (*regi politice*).’ [1]

This, then, is the fundamental principle of Bellarmine's political theory—the authority vested in civil governments comes, in the abstract, immediately from God. In urging the point, as he never tires of doing, he is merely repeating the age-old tradition of Catholic theology. To say that the *Respublica Christiana* of the Middle Ages was an ‘ essentially pagan conception ’ is to forget that there are other writings in the New Testament besides the Apocalypse. True enough, St. John does seem to regard the secular state, represented by Rome, as an enemy with which no truce is possible for the Holy City, the Bride of the Lamb. But St. Paul acts and argues on a widely different principle, and it was the Pauline theory that eventually prevailed. The Roman Empire was baptized by the Popes and became the Holy Roman Empire. In that grandest of all historical conceptions, Church and State, the twin spiritual and temporal powers, were to share amicably and according to recognized principles all the sovereign authority of the West. The Church in her own spiritual sphere was to have complete control, and the State, as by nature the lesser power, must listen to and be guided by her advice, even in such matters as had only an indirect bearing on the salvation of souls. The pagan State of pre-Christian times had treated religion as a mere department of civic duty. There were not two separate powers claiming allegiance, each in its own sphere, but one omnipotent, all-absorbing secular power against which conscience had no court of appeal. In the Middle Ages, on the other hand, Church and Empire were conceived as distinct yet united, as possessed of separate yet mutually-connected ends, and as forming a vast federation conterminous with the boundaries of Catholicism. The Popes were not afraid to give full force to the implications of this magnificent idea. Taking their cue from the Old Testament, they invested the secular ruler with a divine character. At his coronation the king became the Lord's anointed—*Dei gratia rex*—and at the same time, he swore an oath that he would be the loyal protector of the Church. The whole ceremony was of the nature of an implicit pact, for when the Pope by crowning a king or emperor gave final sanction to the choice made by electors or people, the monarch was rightly considered to have accepted the conditions under which alone he could have received that most persuasive guarantee of his legitimacy. Should he, then, fail in his duty to the Church, the Pope might revoke his benediction and declare his crown forfeit.

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[1] *De Laicis*, cap. vii, ad quintum.

The deposing power once claimed by the Holy See may appear a grotesque notion in the twentieth century, but it was perfectly natural in the thirteenth ; the logical consequence of the world-order as men then understood it. What they strove after above all other things was unity, and some such power as that claimed and exercised by the Holy See appeared to be the only sure bulwark against the elements of disruption. Those elements were there all the time, and their menace to the dearest ideal of medieval Europe explains, if it does not entirely justify, the stern measures of suppression adopted by some of the Popes. In the end, the centrifugal forces proved too strong for the centripetal. Ambitious monarchs, such as the Emperors Henry IV and Frederick I, perceived, and their astute lawyers perceived, that the doctrine of the divine origin of earthly sovereignty, on which the Church insisted, might be employed to shake off the tutelage of the Church. At the very time when Boniface VIII was re-asserting in his famous Bull, *Unam Sanctam*, the subordination of the temporal to the spiritual power, regalist authors in France were proclaiming that their King held his rights immediately from God alone. It was thus that the theory of the Divine Right of Kings came into being, a theory against which Bellarmine fought some of his most strenuous battles. According to its first exponents and defenders, it was only a logical deduction from the Church's own teaching on the origin of power. Whether that was rightly maintained or not, the theory quickly developed, when divorced from other balancing elements in the Catholic system, into a doctrine of secular absolutism.

Long before Bellarmine was born, the *Respublica Christiana* which had so captured and enraptured the medieval mind was a dream of the past. But it was a dream too fair to be easily forgotten by Popes and theologians. They would linger over it, hug it, half persuade themselves that it was still a reality, even while strident nationalism was everywhere clamouring in their ears that the glory of it was departed from Israel. Bellarmine himself, for all his alertness of vision, was one of those influenced to some extent by the great memory.

2. The task with which he was confronted was as difficult and delicate as could well be conceived. The medieval theory of Church and State had to be adjusted to fit a world that had entirely outgrown or rejected the presuppositions on which the theory depended. On the one hand, monarchs were no longer the filial protectors of the rights of the Church. They had, for the most part, gone the road of absolutism, with half of the old teaching as a defiant justification of their claim to be completely independent. Before they could establish that claim, the right of the Pope to control their policy had to be made appear invalid, and it was to that task that William of Occam and Marsiglio of Padua had devoted their talents after the great struggle between Boniface VIII and King Philip of France. Their method was to apply the medieval theory on the origin of political authority to the constitution of the Church itself, by which they hoped to show that if the authority of civil rulers came to them *mediante consilio et electione humana*, so, too, did the Pope's authority come to him. The title of secular rulers was therefore in no way inferior to his. In the sixteenth century, on the other hand, a multitude of writers, Anabaptists, Calvinists, Huguenots, Scottish Presbyterians, and English Puritans, were questioning the very basis of civil obedience, and denying that political authority had in any sense the immediate sanction of God. Between those two extremes the Catholic theologian had to walk warily to find his golden mean.

Bellarmine has proved that the State is a necessity of human nature, and consequently that political authority in general, without which the State could not exist, must be understood to have its origin immediately from God. The next point to be decided is the juridical principle that brings the State into being as a concrete reality under a particular form of government. It has to be kept in mind that his arguments, like those of Suarez after him, run entirely in the domain of law and not in that of history. In other words, he is not concerned at all to trace the historical forces that brought the kingdoms or republics of his age into existence, but only to find the ethical justification of the obedience which they claimed. For this reason, much of the criticism launched against the following passages is quite irrelevant. Bellarmine's first and fundamental point was to prove the divine origin of political authority in the abstract.

> In the second place [he continues] it is to be noted that this power rests immediately, as in its subject, in the whole multitude of the people, for the power comes from God, and God having assigned it to no particular man must have given it to the multitude. Besides, if positive law be left out of account, no better reason can be shown why one man rather than another, where all are equal, should have the government in his hands. Consequently, the power belongs to the people as a whole. . . .[1]
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> Thirdly, observe that the law of nature constrains the multitude to transfer their power into the keeping of one or more persons, for the State at large cannot exercise it, and therefore is obliged to make it over to some one man or some few. In this way, the power of princes, considered in general, is also sanctioned by the law of nature and the will of God, nor could the human race, even though assembled entire in a great parliament, decree the contrary, namely that there should be no princes nor rulers.
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> Fourthly, observe that concrete and particular forms of government have their sanction from the law of nations and not from the law of nature, for it is obvious that it rests with the people as a whole to decide whether they shall set over themselves a king, or consuls, or other magistrates. Furthermore, for a legitimate reason the people can change their government from a monarchy to an aristocracy or democracy, and also the other way about, as we read happened in ancient Rome.[2]

The teaching of the two chief passages with which the reader is now acquainted reappears in other sections of the Controversies in such a way as to prove that it was very deeply rooted in Bellarmine's convictions. The ruling and influential ideas in a man's thought are not those which he is constantly trying to prove correct, but those whose correctness he takes for granted. That Bellarmine was inclined to take for granted the theory which he defended in set terms in the treatise *De Membris Ecclesiae*, is shown by his use of it as a sort of postulate in the earlier treatise *De Verbo Dei*. Thus, in order to prove that secular rulers are not the legitimate arbiters of religious controversy, he proceeds in the following fashion:

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[1] How little of a mere innovator Bellarmine was in arguing as he did, appears from the following passage of the Spanish Dominican theologian, Francis of Vittoria, who died in 1546 : ' By the arrangement of God, then, the State possesses this [civil] power, and the *causa materialis* in which the power resides is, by the natural and divine law, the State itself. . . . For since by divine and natural law authority to govern the State must exist, and since apart from common, positive, and human law there is no greater reason why the power should be vested in one man rather than another, it follows necessarily that the community itself must have it.' *Relectio de Potestate civili*, n. 7, Ingolstadt, 1580.

[2] *De Membris Ecclesiae*, lib. III, cap. vi.

> The secular prince cannot act beyond the limits of the mandate given to him by the causes that set him in power. Now the causes of secular sovereignty are human and natural, for the efficient cause is the election of the people, and the final cause is the temporal peace and tranquillity of the State. Therefore the Prince, as such, possesses only the human power and authority which the people are able to give him, and which are necessary for the maintenance of temporal peace. A plain indication of the truth of this reasoning is the fact that there are and always have been true kings and temporal princes entirely unconnected with the true Church. Nor may a counter-argument be found in St. Paul's words, *There is no power but from God, and he that resisteth the power resisteth the ordinance of God*, for the Apostle does not wish to say that royal power is of divine origin immediately but only mediately, inasmuch as God planted a natural instinct in the hearts of men to create for themselves a king. . .[1]

The statement in the passage just quoted, that secular sovereignty is caused by the election of the people, is not intended to be an historical account of the rise of monarchies and republics. Bellarmine knew very well that few governments had been set up by plebiscite. He is on ethical ground all the time, and if he does not explain clearly what he means by the protean notion, 'consent,' neither do his opponents explain clearly what they mean by the no less protean term, 'designation.'

In order to give precision and lucidity to his teaching, Blessed Robert is fond of comparing civil with ecclesiastical authority. This he does both in the Controversies and in later polemical works. In the chapters *De Laicis* he says:

> Two differences are observable between political and ecclesiastical power. One of these is connected with the subject in whom the power resides, political power being in the multitude whereas ecclesiastical power is vested immediately in one person. The other difference is to be found in the sanction on which either power rests. Political power, taken in general, is of divine right, but in concrete instances it is based on the law of nations. Ecclesiastical power, on the other hand, is in every way divinely sanctioned and immediately from God.

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[1] *Prima Controversia Generalis, de Verbo Dei*, lib. III, cap. ix.

In an earlier book of the same treatise in which the foregoing passage occurs, he is still more explicit. He is dealing with the clerical members of the Church and has proved that the election of bishops is not a right of lay people.

> Perhaps you will object [he continues] that though the subjects of a secular state are called sheep in the Scriptures, and their kings pastors, yet the election of the king is the right of the subjects. I reply that the nature and constitution of an earthly state are different from those of the heavenly or Christian Polity. In the secular state all men are born naturally free, and consequently the people as a whole is the immediate depositary of political power, *as long as they shall not have transferred it to some ruler.* The Christian Church, on the other hand, never possessed such liberty, for with her was born her King and Pastor, Christ having simultaneously established His Church and placed St. Peter over it. . . .[1]

One more passage must be quoted in this connection, as it gives some further details about the theory under discussion. It is from the answer which Bellarmine published during the height of the Venetian controversy in 1606 to an adversary of the Holy See named Giovanni Marsilio. Marsilio had contended as a counterblast to the claims of Pope Paul V, that the authority of secular rulers was no whit inferior to his, inasmuch as 'without exception they have received their power immediately from God'. To his arguments, based principally on the text *nullą potestas nisi a Deo*, Bellarmine answers:

> It is quite true that all power is from God, but some power, such as that of the Pope, comes from God immediately, while another kind of power, such as that of temporal princes, is derived from God not immediately but through the consent of human wills. If it be objected that the power of the Pope is derived from his election by the cardinals just as the power of princes comes from their election or succession, the answer is that the cardinals in electing a Pope do not confer his authority upon him, but only designate a person upon whom God then confers it. The election or succession of princes, on the other hand, either gives them their power, or at least causes to be passed on to them that power which the people granted them in the beginning. The people were free,

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[1] *De Membris Ecclesiae. Liber primus, de Clericis*, cap. vii. The importance of the words which we have italicized in this passage will become apparent presently: 'In terrena Republica nascuntur omnes homines naturaliter liberi, et proinde potestatem politicam immediate ipse populus habet, *donec eam in regem aliquem non transtulerit.*'

and it was entirely of their own choice that they transferred to one man that power which is always derived from human consent. . . .[1]

If Marsilio further urges that the authority of princes is immediately from God, just as the rational soul is immediately infused by God into a human body which is sufficiently developed to receive it, I answer that this analogy may properly be applied to the power which the Pope receives from God, but not to the power conferred on princes. This is so because the choice of the cardinals disposes a person to receive the power from God in a manner analogous to that in which parents prepare the matter, that is to say, a human body, to be informed by the rational soul which God infuses into it. But the choice of those who elect a temporal prince really gives the power, or rather passes on to him (*trasfonde*) that power which the people gave to the prince in the beginning. Thus the process is as when a natural agent not only disposes the matter but also introduces the form. . . .[2]

3. In 1607 Bellarmine published a small volume containing various corrections and elucidations of the works that had already seen the light. It is a very interesting little book, showing as it plainly does the innumerable worries and anxieties that printers caused authors in those days. At the end there is a *Correctorium* of nearly a hundred pages, in which are catalogued ' the errors that have crept into the Venice edition of Cardinal Robert Bellarmine's books through the negligence of printers.' Blessed Robert informs us that the ' sleepiness ' of these men was responsible for the omission in places of entire sentences and paragraphs. Worst of all, on more than forty occasions they either inserted or left out negative particles, thus making him say the very opposite to what he intended. ' This made me feel very sorry for myself,' he adds, ' especially as I had most carefully revised all my works and corrected every single misprint in the former editions.' In the little volume of which we speak, he does a good deal more than correct the blunders of compositors. New arguments are offered to supplement those by which he had established his

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[1] On this point Blessed Robert had a most interesting controversy, in 1614, with an excellent Sorbonne doctor named André Duval. The debate was conducted by both parties with charming courtesy. Bellarmine not only insisted on the essential difference between a Papal election and the election of a civil government, but went on to say that it would be a very bad thing if a nation came to believe that their king could never, on any account, be deposed,—' Hinc enim fundaretur tyrannis aeterna.' Le Bachelet, *Auctarium Bellarminianum*, pp. 601–619.

[2] *Risposta del Cardinale Bellarmino alla Difesa delle otto Proposizioni di Giovanni Marsilio Napolitano. Opera Omnia.* Ed. Fèvre, Paris, 1873, p. 77.

various theses, and weak points in the old arguments are carefully attended to. With regard to the subject which we have been discussing so far in this chapter, he says:

> We have taught that the political power possessed by kings and princes does not come to them immediately from God, but only through the deliberation and consent of men. Since this is the common opinion, we did not trouble to fortify it by arguments. While we were reviewing the question, however, some writers had maintained that the political power of kings comes from God not less immediately than the power of the Pope, so we thought that something further should be said about the matter in this place.

Blessed Robert then cites three representative authorities for the view,[1] St. Thomas from the medieval schoolmen, Dominic Soto, author of a classic treatise *de Justitia et Jure*, from more recent theologians, and the widely influential sixteenth-century canonist, Navarrus. This done, he turns for the first time to history in quest of support, but more to find illustrations than to weave ethical arguments out of non-ethical material. In thus confining himself he may have been wiser than his modern critics, for 'is' and 'ought to be' are not necessarily convertible terms.

> The Roman State first had kings [he writes]. Then the people themselves removed the kings and set up magistrates who were to hold office for a year, their rule, like that of the kings, being considered just and legitimate. So too, in later times, the authority of the consuls was held to be just and legitimate because it was the will of the people that had placed them in power, and this form of government adopted by the Romans is praised in the first Book of Machabees. Eventually the same Roman State returned to its first form of government under one absolute prince, and this form was not regarded as less just or legitimate, for the Scriptures order obedience to such princes. Justinian in his *Institutes* gives the reason when he says: 'The good pleasure of the Prince has the force of law, because the People, by the *lex regia* which was passed concerning his rule, have transferred to him all their own authority and jurisdiction.' . . .[2]
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> What we have said about the Roman State might be narrated of many other states which sometimes changed the form of government under one man into an Aristocracy or Democracy and again

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[1] 'Quibus plurimi alii adjungi possent,' he is careful to add in a parenthesis.

[2] This famous maxim is really from the pagan jurist Ulpian who died more than three centuries before Justinian became Emperor.

> returned to the rule of one prince. Because of this Navarrus does not hesitate to affirm that the citizens of a state never so completely transfer their power to a king as not to retain it *in habitu*, and thus be able to receive it *actu* also, under certain circumstances.[1]

The concluding sentence of this excerpt brings us face to face with one of the most delicate points in the scholastic theory on the origin of civil authority, a point on which chiefly depended all that Catholic publicists of the past had to say about the liceity of resistance and rebellion. In the passage cited, Bellarmine does not openly approve the assertion of Navarrus,[2] but, when in 1608 King James of England denounced the doctrine of the Spanish canonist as 'the foundation of all sedition,' he defended that writer warmly. The words of Navarrus, he said, 'were those of a very well-known author, and though they had been read and pondered for a long time by large numbers of men in every Christian country, no one had ever written before that Navarrus had laid the foundations of sedition.'[3] Still, even while saying this, Blessed Robert does not explicitly embrace the opinion in question. 'Neque illa sententia est proprie mea,' he points out, and complains that the King of England should have fathered on him a view which he was merely quoting. James had also attributed to him the statement that 'every king is elected by his people.'

> This proposition [he answered] is neither mine nor that of any other author with whom I am acquainted. Moreover it is patently false since there are so many kingdoms in the world in which succession and not election is the method by which rulers receive their authority.

Indeed, he was perfectly well aware in all his references to political power that most of the kingdoms of this world had come into being, not by the peaceful choice of their peoples, but through the violence, rapacity, and ambition of military leaders. Such a hard fact of history, however, does not embarrass him in the least, for he is writing as a philosopher.

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[1] *Recognitio Librorum omnium Roberti Bellarmini . . . ab ipso edita*, 2nd ed., Ingolstadt, 1608, pp. 56–58.

[2] The actual words of Navarrus, otherwise known as Martin Azpilcueta, are as follows: 'Nullam communitatem posse abdicare se ita penitus ab hac jurisdictione, sibi naturali lege indita, ut nullo casu eam resumere possit. Populi non carent omnino jurisdictione, sed ejus usu, habent enim illam in habitu licet careant actu.' *Opera*, Venice, 1588, vol. III, p. 82.

[3] *Apologia Roberti Bellarmini . . . pro responsione sua ad Librum Jacobi Magnae Britanniae Regis*, cap. xiii. *Opera Omnia* (Paris ed. 1874), t. XII, pp. 184–185. The controversy between Bellarmine and King James is dealt with fully in later chapters of this book.

> Even though the men who established kingdoms in the beginning [he says] were generally invaders, yet in the course of time they or their successors become legitimate rulers because the people gradually give their consent. For this reason the King of France is now admitted by everyone to be a legitimate sovereign, though his kingdom arose through the unjust dispossession of the Gauls by the Franks, and the same may be said of the Roman Empire itself, which was established by Julius Cæsar, an oppressor of his country.[1]

In another passage of the Apology written in answer to King James, most, though not all, of the doubts that a reader might have been entertaining about Bellarmine's teaching are set at rest:

> When I say that the power of the people is transferred to the king . . . this is to be understood of the first beginnings of kingdoms, not of any particular historical instance of a kingdom's establishment. In the beginning the people were free to set up a form of government with determined authority and for a definite time, as free republics do. They might also have chosen a perpetual form of government under an absolute monarch, and have transferred to him all their power, as we see happened in kingdoms where succession appoints the ruler. But once the magistrate, whether temporary or perpetual, has been set in power, the people have no further authority over him. It is he, rather, especially if he be a king, who has authority over them, and they may not, without the most serious sin, withdraw their allegiance from their legitimate prince, nor stir up sedition or rebellion against him.[2]

In 1612, Blessed Robert wrote an *Examen* of a book in defence of the theories of King James, that had appeared under the name of an English Catholic named Roger Widdrington. This *Examen*, which was printed but not published, was sent to a distinguished theologian of Cologne named Adolph Schulcken that he might edit and publish it as a work emanating from his own pen, the Pope being unwilling that Bellarmine's name should appear on any more books against the King of England. The curious history of Schulcken's *Apologia*, which was issued in 1613, will be given in another chapter, so here we need only state the bare fact that that book embodied the *Examen* with some significant additions. One passage of Schulcken's work runs as follows:

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[1] *De Laicis*, cap. vi.

[2] *Opera Omnia*, t. XII, p. 185.

> The Author of human nature left mankind naturally free to provide themselves with a ruler, to protect themselves against him should he attempt to use his power for their destruction, and to coerce, punish, and depose him in the event of his deserving such treatment. . . . The civil state can remove its ruler for just reasons, because political sovereignty resides naturally and always in the multitude or body politic. . . . The multitude itself is always and always remains the supreme head, and the prince is the vicar of the multitude.[1]

As might have been guessed from what we know of Bellarmine's circumspection in debate, this incautiously worded passage is not in his manuscript.[2] It is Schulcken's private gloss. Bellarmine, indeed, says expressly in the *Examen*: 'I have never dealt with the question whether the citizens of a State can legitimately depose their civil ruler in certain circumstances. In the present work I am not arguing about the deposition of kings through the defection or rebellion of their subjects, for the discussion of such a matter seems to me to be the province of a writer on politics and not that of a theologian.'[3] All that he had committed himself to was the general statement that, given a legitimate reason, the people could change their form of government from a monarchy to an aristocracy or democracy. What the legitimate reasons might be he never attempted to define, but from his general teaching it is plain that they would have to be reasons of an exceedingly urgent kind. Finally, as seen above, he strenuously repudiated the idea that the prince is, in any way, the mere vicar or delegate of the people.

4. Bellarmine's theory on the origin and ethical basis of political power, a theory borrowed in great measure from the medieval scholastics, has often been linked with the adjective 'democratic,' and described as maintaining 'the sovereignty of the people.' The most blessed of all blessed words in the vocabulary of modern politics is doubtless the word democracy, but for all that, in the judgment of an eminent professor who writes as a friend, 'democratic government is less a matter for eulogy than for exploration.'[4] Robert Bellarmine was, certainly, anything but a democrat in the modern sense of that

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[1] *Apologia*, cap. viii.

[2] The autograph manuscript of the *Examen* is in the library of the Gregorian University. There is a copy of it in the Vatican library, and a second in the Brancacciana, Naples.

[3] Le Bachelet, *Auctarium Bellarminianum*, p. 371.

[4] Harold J. Laski, *A Grammar of Politics*, London, 1925, p. 17.

much-abused term. Democracy he considered to be a perfectly legitimate form of government, but he resolutely denied that it was the only or the best form. Like his masters, the scholastics, he is a convinced monarchist, and goes out of his way to justify and exalt the monarchical régime. His first argument is based on the agreement of all ancient writers, Hebrew, Greek, and Latin. From among them he quotes Philo, Homer, Herodotus, Plato, Isocrates, Aristotle, Plutarch, Seneca, St. Justin, St. Cyprian, St. Jerome, and St. Thomas. Then he turns to the Scriptures and makes capital out of the fact that God had not created several heads and fathers of the human race, but only one. The very constitution of nature points in the same direction, he urges :

> God has implanted a natural tendency to the monarchical form of government not only in the hearts of men but in practically all things. . . . In every family the government of mother, sons, servants, and everything else, belongs naturally to the father of the family. . . . Even living things, which are devoid of reason, seem to desire and strive after the rule of one. 'One queen to the bees, one leader to the flock, one ruler to the herd,' says St. Cyprian, and St. Jerome adds that the cranes fly wedge-wise after one leader.[1]

The history of the Chosen Race provides another argument, for their government, constituted by God Himself, was always monarchical whether the supreme head was called a patriarch, a judge, or a king. Finally, reason showed the plain advantages of monarchy. The medieval ideal of order and unity is here in Bellarmine's mind. Order is the first requisite of a well-regulated state, and order will flourish best when one man has supreme control. In an aristocratic form of government or, what comes to the same thing, government by party, the citizens in general have their position marked out for them, but if all the members of the governing group are on a more or less equal footing who is to guarantee that there will not be dissension ? This remark of Blessed Robert has not lost its point, even for modern England. The danger of disunion in a democracy properly so called, does not occupy him long, for it appeared only too obvious.

The second need of every State is that it should be able to prosecute its ends, and that form of government must clearly be the best by which the ends are most easily attained :

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[1] *De Romano Pontifice*, lib. I, cap. ii. Calvin had made merry over St. Cyprian's bees and St. Jerome's cranes. Bellarmine deals with him.

> Now the end and aim of all good government is the union and peace of the citizens, a union which chiefly consists of common ideals and common endeavour. Such, without doubt, will be pursued much more surely and easily if one man rather than many has to be obeyed, for it could hardly be that many men who were in no wise dependent on one another should judge alike about the same things. If one man who has a claim to obedience orders one thing, and another, with an identical claim, orders something contrary, one of them will be disobeyed or the people will be thrown into confusion. Such a disaster could never happen where one man alone had the right to command.

Our author has several other arguments, and some of them excellent ones, to prove that a monarchy, pure and simple, is better than an aristocracy or democracy, pure and simple. So far, he has been arguing in the abstract. Now he descends from such Platonic heights, and writes a chapter with the following title: 'In the world as it is, a form of government combining elements of monarchy, aristocracy, and democracy is more useful than a simple monarchy.' He will not say that it is better, but only that it is more useful 'propter naturae humanae corruptionem.'

> This mixed form of government [he continues] requires, indeed, that there should be one sovereign ruler in the state who issues commands to all and is subject to none, but it requires, too, that the governors of provinces or cities should not be mere lieutenants of the king nor hold office only for a year. They should be true princes, obeying the behests of the chief prince, but meanwhile governing their provinces or cities not as if these belonged to somebody else but as if they were their very own. In this way the government of the state would be both monarchical and aristocratic. If, in addition, neither the king nor the princes under him acquired their dignities by hereditary succession, but the best men from the entire body of citizens were promoted to these dignities, then the state would also have its due element of democracy. That this is the most excellent form of government, and the one most to be desired under the conditions of our mortal life, we shall now prove by two arguments.

Blessed Robert's arguments are that such a régime would include all the good qualities of monarchical government, and be at the same time more welcome and agreeable to everybody. 'All men assuredly prefer a form of government in which they can each have a share, and such a form is the one that we propose because in it a man's worth and not his birth is what counts.'

A second argument, based on the authority of God, shows us exactly what he meant by his 'federalism':

> God has established in His Church a régime such as that which we have described, . . . for in it there is the monarchy of the Holy See, the aristocracy of the bishops, who are true princes and not the mere vicars of the Pope, and finally a form of democracy, inasmuch as there is no man in the entire body of the faithful who may not be called to the episcopate if he be judged worthy of that office.[1]

5. So far was Bellarmine from attempting to minimize the authority and dignity of secular rulers, that not even King James of England himself spoke in higher and more appreciative terms of their office than he did. Against Gerson, and Calvin after him, he proves at considerable length that the laws which the supreme civil authority in a State promulgates 'are not less binding in conscience than the divine law, although they are not as stable as it is, seeing that they may be abrogated by man and the law of God may not.'[2]

While thus stressing 'the divinity that doth hedge a king,' he is careful to urge that the highest title to nobility in civil rulers is their function as servants of the common good:

> The slave is governed, not with a view to his own interests, but to the interest of his master; the citizen is governed with a view to his own interest, not to that of his ruler. The difference between a true prince and a tyrant is in this that the prince, by his rule, seeks not his own advantage but the good of his people, whereas the tyrant and despot has only a private and selfish end in view. Therefore, as St. Augustine teaches, if there is any real service, as between the ruler and the ruled, it is the ruler, not the subject, who is the servant. This is Our Lord's meaning when He says: He that will be first among you shall be the servant of all.[3]

In 1619, when he had passed his seventy-sixth birthday, the Cardinal was urged by the Jesuits in Poland to write a manual of advice and instruction for princes. The book was dedicated by its venerable author to the Crown Prince Ladislas, son of Sigismund III, as it was for the benefit of that young man that the Jesuits had made their appeal. It is entitled *The Duty of a Christian Prince*, and occupies 146 double-column pages of Bellarmine's collected works, thus being a more elaborate treatise than the celebrated *Βασιλικὸν Δῶρον* which James VI of Scotland had written twenty years earlier for the instruction of Prince Henry. This latter work will occupy us in a succeeding chapter, as Bellarmine wrote a severe criticism of it, but it will not be beside the purpose of the present chapter to devote a little attention now to the other book, *De Officio Principis Christiani.* It is not very well known nor often referred to, but it has much to tell us not only about the dignity and duty of the secular prince for whom it was written, but also about the heart of the ecclesiastical prince who wrote it.

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[1] *De Romano Pontifice*, lib. I, cap. iii.

[2] *De Laicis*, cap. xiii. The following three chapters are on war, showing that the civil ruler has a right to declare it, and laying down the conditions that must be fulfilled before it can be declared justly.

[3] *De Laicis*, cap. vii.

Having dealt in the first six chapters with the duties of a prince to his spiritual superiors, namely God, the Pope, his bishop, and his confessor, Bellarmine goes on to treat in the seventh chapter ' of the fatherly charity which a prince must use in the governing of his people ' :

> This is the first virtue that must be found in the hearts of princes, to love their subjects as sons, to procure peace and plenty for them, to protect them from unjust treatment at the hands of officials. If the people know that their prince loves them, they will reciprocate his love, and be ready to spend their substance, and if needs be lay down their lives on his behalf.[1]

The three chapters, next in order, deal with the virtues of prudence and justice that must shine in a prince if he is to rule his people wisely. A prince is not only the head of his people and their pastor, but in a manner a god upon earth—*Deus quidam terrestris*. Consequently princes ' with whom God has deigned to share His holy Name are bound to aim at such purity of life as befits that sacred title '. They are the patterns to which their subjects will look when shaping their own lives, and if they be just, chaste, sober, religious men, their people will be drawn by their example to become so too. The necessity of their state, then,—' a happy necessity '—compels princes to cultivate all the virtues and avoid every kind of vice. They must be just in the distribution of honours and emoluments, carefully shunning favouritism, and considering only the true merit of those whom they would reward.

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[1] *Opera Omnia*, Fèvre's ed., t. VIII, p. 103. Bellarmine sent the Prince to whom it was dedicated a special copy of the *De Officio* ' as a thank-offering for the many and great favours which your noble family has conferred and still confers on our Society ' (*Epistolae familiares*, p. 359).

One point, in this connection, is stressed particularly:

> Many princes have the right of nominating men to bishoprics. If a prince nominates suitable persons, the appointment is valid even though he knew of others who were more suitable. Nevertheless, he commits a mortal sin by passing over the latter.

Justice demands, too, that crimes be punished, the crime of crimes, in Bellarmine's estimation, being blasphemy. 'I should very much like to see Christian princes punish the atrocious sin with the greatest severity,' he says.

Fortitude, temperance, and wisdom are next discussed in their relation to the government of a State. Then comes chapter xiv, *De Magnificentia*, in which princes are exhorted and persuaded by many arguments to raise monuments to themselves in the shape of hospitals, churches, schools, 'and other sumptuous edifices.' Blessed Amadeus, Duke of Savoy, is proposed as a model, a man who 'spent daily, in feeding the poor, all and more than all the money that many princes waste on hounds and falcons, and since to have pity on the poor is to become the creditor of God, his coffers were never empty notwithstanding his munificence.'

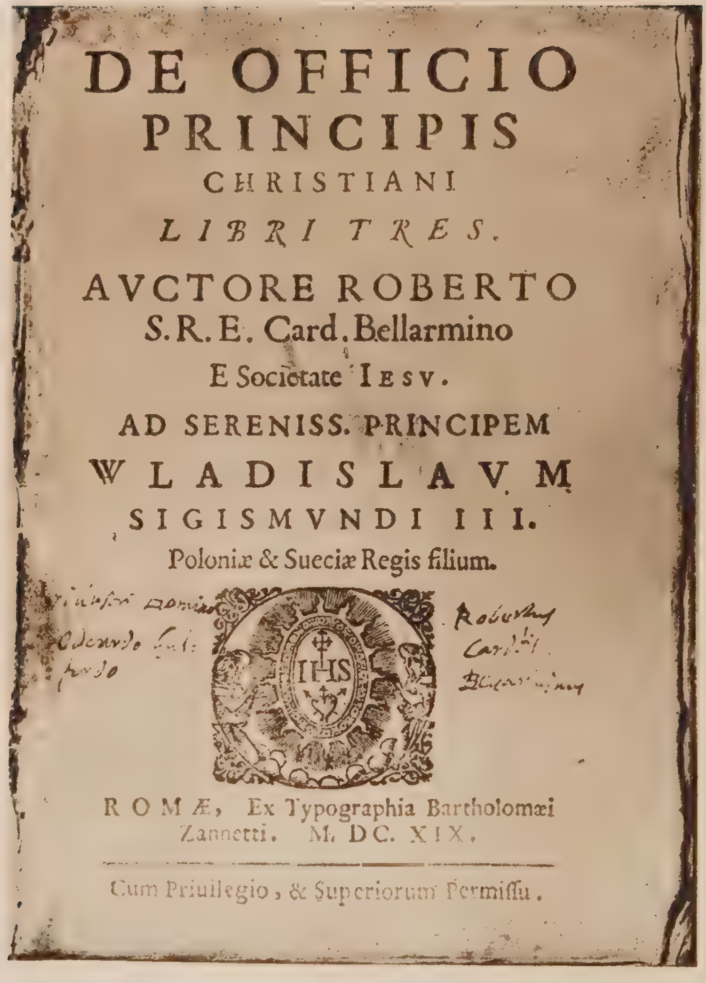
Nowhere is the heart of the writer more evident than in the chapters devoted to clemency and mercy:

> Clemency is a most lovable virtue, . . . a virtue proper to God, the King of all kings, and so most honourable in the princes of this world. *Clemens est Dominus Deus vester*, wrote King Ezechias to his people, exhorting them to repent, and Solomon said that clemency was the strength of thrones. It is indeed so, for no soldiers can ever be so sure a protection to a kingdom as the known clemency of its king.

When he comes to treat of mercy, Blessed Robert deals severely with Seneca for having said that it was not so much a virtue as a vice:

> Let him argue and play the philosopher with his Stoics, this Seneca who treats men as if they were made of iron rather than flesh and blood; who will not permit them to grieve, and who contends that his wise man would rejoice and leap for joy in the midst of flames, in the Bull of Phalaris itself.

The noble virtue of mercy so shines in the nature of God, that like clemency it can be predicated of Him alone in its fullness. He alone has the power to take away all misery, and



DE OFFICIO
PRINCIPIS
CHRISTIANI
LIBRI TRES.

AVCTORE ROBERTO
S.R.E. Card. Bellarmino
E Societate IESV.

AD SERENISS. PRINCIPEM
WLADISLAVM
SIGISMVNDI III.
Poloniæ & Sueciæ Regis filium.

Illustri domino
Edoardo Guil-
fordo

Robertus
Card.lis
Bellarminus

ROMÆ, Ex Typographia Bartholomæi
Zannetti. M. DC. XIX.

Cum Priuilegio, & Superiorum Permiſſu.

AUTOGRAPHED TITLE-PAGE OF THE
'DE OFFICIO PRINCIPIS.'

This copy of his book was presented by Bellarmine to a well-known Kentish recusant, Edward Guildford.

He alone does take it away, in the measure that His wisdom sees to be well:

> Next after God comes the ruler of an earthly State, who has it in his power to remove distress of many kinds not only from the lives of one man or another but from entire cities and provinces. Yea, and he does in fact remove them when he endeavours to become like to God in mercy and pity. From how many miseries does not a prince relieve his people, if, when about to declare war, he holds his hand from a merciful thought of the evils that might befall them? . . . Nor is it only his people, taken as a whole, that the mercy of the prince will bless. Many a private citizen will be delivered from various troubles if the ruler makes careful provision for the speedy passage through the law-courts of all cases in which poor people are involved. Nor must he permit such unfortunates to be mulcted in litigation, as so often happens, of a much larger sum than they had hoped to recover when they began the suit.

Blessed Robert has a great deal more to say about law-courts and the way business ought to be conducted in them. He is pleading all the time for the helpless, the hard-worked, and the oppressed, urging the prince on nearly every page to be generous in his alms and merciful in all his dealings. So great was his respect for the dignity of secular rulers that nothing but perfection in them would satisfy his great soul. To provide them with models, he went to the trouble of writing, or borrowing from other writers, the lives of eight saintly men who had held royal or quasi-royal authority in the Old Testament, and of ten canonized or beatified kings and princes, including Edward the Confessor, in Christian times. The life of St. Edward takes up eleven pages. We may end this brief and inadequate account of a very beautiful book with an amusing piece of advice which the Cardinal offers princes on the management of their wives. It will be best, perhaps, to leave it in its Latin: *De conjuge principis hoc solum admonendum esse censeo, ut vir omni animi provisione caveat, ne uxor, quamvis sapiens videatur, ipsi viro dominari incipiat.*[1]

6. Modern writers on the history of political ideas are, as a rule, decidedly unwilling to admit that a sixteenth-century Italian Jesuit could have been an enlightened and disinterested advocate of a generous ideal in government. Professor McIlwain of Harvard, an authority of the first rank, believes that 'Bellarmine in his heart cared nothing' for the 'republican' views which he is credited with having defended. Pro-

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[1] *De Officio*, etc. *Opera*, t. VIII, pp. 119–120.

fessors Gooch and Dunning are similarly of opinion that mere theological opportunism, and not any love of truth for its own sake, is the explanation of the Cardinal's venture in the realm of political theory, his one aim being to prop up the tottering pretensions of the Pope.[1]

The assumption underlying these criticisms is that the theory was new to the text-books of Rome, a weapon hastily seized from the Presbyterian arsenal on the famous old Jesuit principle that the end justifies the means. How much truth there is in the innuendo may be guessed from the following passage which St. Thomas penned almost three centuries before Bellarmine was born :

> Two points are to be observed concerning the right ordering of rulers in a state or nation. One is that all should take some share in the government. . . . The other point is in respect of the kinds of government, or the different ways in which the constitutions are established. . . . The best form of government is in a State or Kingdom, wherein one is given the power to preside over all, while under him are others having governing powers : and yet a government of this kind is shared by all, both because all are eligible to govern, and because the rulers are chosen by all. For this is the best form of polity, being partly kingdom, since there is one at the head of all ; partly aristocracy, in so far as a number of persons are set in authority ; partly democracy, i.e. government by the people, in so far as the rulers can be chosen from the people, and the people have the right to choose their rulers.[2]

It is at least possible, then, that the writers named above are wrong in their interpretation of Bellarmine's motives. But even granted that the interests of the Church, and not any genuine sympathy with popular aspirations, were at the root of his political theories, Bellarmine would not, for that reason, deserve less praise than is often lavished on such alleged heralds of democracy as Hotman, Beza, the author of the *Vindiciae*, Boucher, etc. As will be seen in a later chapter, these men were opportunists of a far more unblushing type than he, if he was an opportunist at all. Whatever is to be said about his motives, it would appear to be quite certain that some Catholic writers are wrong in their interpretation of his teaching. They are in two classes, (1) those who wish to exalt the Cardinal, and (2) those who do not. We shall deal very briefly with the first class now and say something about the other further on. As an instance of undue credit or at least the wrong kind of credit that has been claimed for Bellarmine, we may take some assertions from a recent Catholic book called *The State and the Church*. In this very learned work, one of its distinguished joint authors says that Bellarmine and Suarez were the first to state clearly and defend the two principles that distinguish the American form of government from that of any other known to history.[1]

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[1] *The Political Works of James I*, London, 1918. Introduction by C. H. McIlwain, p. xxiv ; G. P. Gooch, *English Democratic Ideas in the Seventeenth Century*, p. 28 ; W. A. Dunning, *A History of Political Theories from Luther to Montesquieu*, p. 149 ; Lecky was more open-minded, and warned his readers that ' it would be a mistake to suppose that the Jesuits advocated liberal principles only with a view to theological advantages.' *History of the Rise and Influence of Rationalism in Europe* (1890), vol. II, p. 149.

[2] *Summa Theologica*, Ia, IIae, Q. 105, art. I. English translation by the Dominican Fathers. Part II (first part), third number, London, 1915, p. 250. It is interesting to note that even Bodin, the famous French champion of the Divine Right of Kings, admitted the wisdom of the mixed régime advocated by St. Thomas and Bellarmine. It is not enough, he wrote ' de dire que l'estat royal est le plus excellent si on ne monstre aussi qu'il doit estre tempéré par le gouvernement aristocratique et populaire.' *Les six livres de la République*. Antwerp ed. of 1680, p. 1013. The book was written in 1576.

The principle which is alleged to have been 'first stated by Bellarmine,' and to be 'his chief contribution to the science of government,' is 'his doctrine of divided sovereignty.' Whether the doctrine referred to *is* a doctrine of divided sovereignty, and what precisely divided sovereignty means, are questions with which we need not concern ourselves here. What we have to investigate is the validity of the claim that the constitution of the United States reflects Bellarmine's teaching in one very important respect. Bellarmine, it will be remembered, held that the most serviceable and acceptable form of government, in the world as it is, would be an elective monarchy, the supreme ruler having under him divisional rulers, also elected and enjoying full authority in their respective cities or provinces. From the words of St. Thomas quoted above, it is quite plain that Blessed Robert was not going very much beyond the medieval tradition when he put forward his suggestions.[2] Between those suggestions and the American form of government there are obvious resemblances, but whether the resemblances are more than superficial may be questioned. Bellarmine himself has supplied us with the test. One proof which he gives of the excellence of his polity is the fact that God had provided His Church with just such a form of government (*ejusmodi regimen*) as the one he was advocating. Now no theologian would admit that the constitution of the Catholic Church was based on a theory of divided sovereignty, even though bishops are real rulers in their dioceses and not the mere vicars or vicegerents of the Pope. On the other hand, it may well be doubted whether any jurist or historian would allow that the constitution of the United States is a fairly exact model of the constitution of the Catholic Church. In view of these complementary negations and doubts, must we not frankly abandon any attempt to turn the Cardinal into a sort of prophet of American Federalism ?

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[1] *The State and the Church*, written and edited by John A. Ryan, D.D., LL.D., and Moorhouse F. X. Millar, S.J. New York, 1922, p. 118.

[2] A great deal of Bellarmine's political teaching is straight out of Aristotle.

The plain truth of the matter is that he was not a great political theorist, and the real merit and importance of his achievement in this sphere lay, not in its originality, but rather in the fact that he was the first to systematize and methodically defend a very old but uncodified Catholic conviction. This was twenty-seven years before its classic presentation in the great treatises of Suarez, with whose name the theory that political power comes to the ruler from God through the people is generally associated.[1]

On matters juristic, Suarez was a far greater writer than Bellarmine, but Bellarmine, owing to the character of his Controversies, was much more widely read and studied, and exerted a correspondingly wider influence. An amusing proof of this fact is afforded by the *Leviathan* of Thomas Hobbes, which appeared in 1651. Hobbes refers to Suarez only once, and dismisses him with the contemptuous question : ‘ When men write whole volumes of such stuffe, are they not Mad or intend to make others so ? ’[2] It is a very different story when he comes to Bellarmine. Bellarmine for him is the man by whom the challenge to royal autocracy ‘ hath been maintained chiefly and as strongly as is possible,' and therefore, he continues: 'I have thought it necessary, as briefly as I can, to examine the grounds and strength of his discourse.'[1] This examination goes on without a break for twenty-five weighty pages and ends at last: 'Thus much of Power Ecclesiasticall; wherein I had been more briefe, forbearing to examine these Arguments of Bellarmine if they had been his, as a private man, and not as the Champion of the Papacy against all other Christian Princes and States.'[2] Another famous defender of state absolutism, this time in the shape of the Divine Right of Kings, was Sir Robert Filmer, whose *Patriarcha* came out posthumously in 1680. Robert Filmer knew Robert Bellarmine for a foe. At the very beginning of his book, he writes as follows about the scholastic theory on the origin of civil authority:

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[1] The attribution is entirely just, as Suarez was by far the most able exponent and defender the theory has ever had. At the same time it has to be remembered that Suarez was but the competent spokesman of a tradition that stretched back to the Middle Ages and beyond. On this point Dr. A. J. Carlyle, the greatest modern authority on medieval political theory, writes : ‘ The first principle which seems to me to be behind the whole structure of medieval society, is this, that political authority is the authority of the whole community. . . . This principle is implicit in the two great practical facts of medieval society, the first, that law is the law of the community, the second, that the administrative organs of the community, if we may use a modern phrase, derive their authority from the consent of the community.’ *American Historical Review*, October 1913, p. 6.

[2] *Leviathan*, Cambridge ed., 1904, p. 51.

> This tenet was first hatched in the schools and hath been fostered by all succeeding papists for good divinity. The divines also of the reformed churches have entertained it. . . . Cardinal Bellarmine and Calvin both look asquint this way. . . . I will lay down some passages of Cardinal Bellarmine that may best unfold the state of the controversy.

After having made his quotations Sir Robert concludes ungrammatically: 'Thus far Bellarmine; in which passages are comprised the strength of all that ever I have read or heard produced for the natural liberty of the subject.'[3] The interesting thing about this veteran royalist is not his own exploded political philosophy but the replies which his challenge provoked. Of these the most notable were Algernon Sidney's *Discourses Concerning Government*, and Locke's *Two Treatises* in which 'the False Principles and Foundation of Sir Robert Filmer and his Followers are Detected and Overthrown.' While in exile for the sake of his republicanism, Sidney had been treated with the greatest courtesy and generosity by the Roman Cardinals, but he had no liking for their Church, and it apparently embarrassed him to find one of their number set down by Filmer as the ablest champion of the political philosophy which he was defending in his *Discourses*.

> I do not find [he wrote] any great matters in the passages taken out of Bellarmine, which our author says 'comprehend the strength

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[1] *Leviathan*, p. 406.

[2] *Leviathan*, pp. 406–431.

[3] *Patriarcha, or the Natural Power of Kings*, 1st ed., pp. 7–9.

of all that he had ever heard, read, or seen produced for the natural liberty of the subject.' But as he has not told us where they are to be found, I do not think myself obliged to examine all his works, to see whether they are rightly cited or not.[1] However, there is certainly nothing new in them. We see the same as to the substance, in those who wrote many ages before him, as well as in many that have lived since his time, who neither minded him, nor what he had written. I dare not take upon me to give an account of his works having read few of them, but as he seems to have laid the foundation of his discourse in such common notions as were assented to by all mankind, those who follow the same method have no more regard to Jesuitism and Popery, though he was a Jesuite and a Cardinal, than they who agree with Faber and other Jesuits in the principles of Geometry, which no sober man ever denied.[2]

John Locke was even more of an anti-Roman bigot than Sidney, but we do not know whether it was for this reason that he carefully avoided, in his answer to Filmer, any reference to the Jesuit in whom Filmer had found 'the strength of all that he had ever read or heard produced for the natural liberty of the subject.' One of the few authors whose text the Whig philosopher condescended to cite was the Scottish regalist, William Barclay. Barclay and Filmer were the two men whom he was most anxious to refute, and curiously enough each of them had considered Bellarmine to be the ablest defender of the theory opposite to his own.[3]

From his study of Barclay, Locke must have become very familiar with Bellarmine's views, but it would be going too far to assert that they were a direct or controlling influence in the fashioning of his political creed.[4] After all, there is a great deal of truth in Sidney's contention that these views, entirely Catholic though they were in origin, had been appropriated by all kinds of sects, and were diffused widely throughout post-Reformation Europe. Whatever doubt there may be about the immediate derivation of Sidney's and Locke's theories, it is quite certain that the framers of the American

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[1] They are rightly cited.

[2] *Discourses*, 1805 ed., vol. 1, p. 20.

[3] Barclay's famous book, *De Potestate Papae*, had Bellarmine in view from the first page to the last. The Cardinal's answer appeared in 1611, and caused an uproar in both London and Paris. The story is told in the second volume of this work.

[4] Speaking of Bellarmine and his fellow-Jesuits, Professor McIlwain writes: 'At a single glance, it becomes obvious how much English theorists for two centuries and more owed to a party whom they dared not acknowledge.' *Political Works of King James I*, Introduction, p. xxvii.

Declaration of Independence were largely influenced by the writings of those two men.[1] The fact that the writings in question had originated as direct answers to Sir Robert Filmer's attack on the scholastic theory, of which he considered Bellarmine to be the best defender, combined with the fact that both Madison and Jefferson were acquainted with Bellarmine's Controversies, has led some Catholic scholars to surmise that the saintly Cardinal may have had a certain amount of indirect influence on the formulation of America's charter of independence.[2] It was this pleasant and by no means impossible suggestion that inspired one of the best-edited and most popular of Catholic periodicals in the United States to say at the time of Bellarmine's beatification: 'We Americans ought to adopt him as our own particular saint and patron.'[3]

7. We alluded above to a second class of Catholic writers whose attitude to the political theory defended by Bellarmine and Suarez was one of open hostility. In his famous *Defence of the Catholic Faith*, which was also *ex professo* a defence of Bellarmine, Suarez had expressed the following opinion about the Cardinal's exposition of the theory: *Sententiam Illustrissimi Bellarmini antiquam, receptam, veram, ac necessariam esse censemus.*[4] Bellarmine himself had asserted without fear of contradiction that in his day it was the *sententia communis*, and the *sententia communis* it undoubtedly continued to be until the dawn of the nineteenth century. Then, with the horrors and excesses of popular rule during the French and subsequent revolutions staring them in the face, Catholic philosophers and theologians began to ask themselves whether a theory that made the consent of the people the only morally valid justification of civil governments could possibly be true. A remark may be permitted to us at this point. Surely good philosophy ought to have no use for panics and prejudices. Rather ought it to

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[1] Jefferson made this plain in a letter to Henry Lee, 8 May 1825. Jefferson's *Works*, Washington ed., vol. VIII, p. 407. Locke's very words and phrases are sometimes used in the Declaration. On the other hand, there appears to be no evidence that Jefferson was influenced in any way by the ideas of Rousseau.

[2] See, for example, a very interesting article entitled *The Virginia Declaration of Rights and Cardinal Bellarmine*, which was contributed to the *Catholic Historical Review* (October 1917, pp. 276 sqq.) by Gaillard Hunt, head of the Department of Manuscripts in the Library of Congress. The Catholic derivation of American political theory in general was investigated by Professor A. O'Rahilly in a learned article entitled *The Sources of English and American Democracy*. *Studies*, June 1919, pp. 189 sqq.

[3] *The Catholic World*, May 1923. Editorial Comment, p. 255.

[4] *Defensio*, lib. III, cap. ii, § 2.

stand by its sober findings, however much the passions of men may have travestied them, and stand by them all the more resolutely when economic or political developments would appear to give them the lie.

In 1839 the Jesuit Taparelli published his great *Theoretical Essay on Natural Right from an Historical Standpoint* (Palermo, five volumes), in which was developed the thesis that civil government normally originated not from the consent of the governed but by the extension of paternal power through the patriarchal head of a group of families. This masterly essay marked a definite epoch in the history of Catholic social theory. From the date of its appearance, the pendulum of opinion began to swing slowly away from the venerable doctrine which Bellarmine and Suarez had defended. Taparelli considered their view to be so wrong that for the sake of their honour he felt it necessary to offer a few remarks in extenuation.

> It ought not to surprise us [he says], that in those centuries even men of extraordinary genius should have expressed themselves inexactly on this matter; for they had not yet learned from experience those terrible lessons which it has taught our age so clearly, with a voice of thunder and the brightness of lightning. The marvel is that after such teaching so many can still be deaf to such a voice and blind to such a light, and continue to extol the sovereignty of the people and the inalienable rights of man to self-government.[1]

One of the main criticisms levelled against the Bellarmine-Suarez position by recent scholastic writers is that it is 'at variance with historical fact.'[2] As has been already suggested, it is a little difficult to see the force of historical objections to a purely ethical argument. Is not the employment of such weapons in this connection somewhat as if a man were to cast doubts on the soundness of the Sermon on the Mount because the world at large does not act according to its principles? Bellarmine and Suarez were as well aware as any modern critic that their theory was not 'historic' in the sense of accounting for the actual genesis of the world's kingdoms and republics. But that was not the problem on which they had engaged. They did not care how states had originated because what they were looking for was not origins, but the moral factor that validates or invalidates before human reason the actual social relationships in which men find themselves. The relationship of citizens to the civil authority in a State may have come into existence in many legitimate ways, through the natural and gradual coalescence of separate social groups, through victory in a just war, through heredity or prescription. All these were recognized by Bellarmine and Suarez to be good titles to obedience in a ruler, but they held that they were rooted in a more fundamental and indispensable title, which was the tacit or express consent of the ruled. A man might have acquired the woman he wanted to wed, in several ways. He might have bought her outright in a slave-market, or have carried her off by force, or have negotiated behind her back with her parents. But whatever the means that brought her into his power, she becomes his true and lawful wife only when she yields her free consent. In the same way, according to Bellarmine and Suarez, many causes good or bad may have contributed to create a *de facto* government in a State, but only one cause can, in the long run, turn it into a *de jure* government, and that is the free consent of the people. It may be possible to find objections against this theory on philosophical grounds, but it is very difficult to see how history can be of assistance to its opponents.[1]

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[1] *Saggio Teoretico*, Roman ed. of 1855, vol. I, p. 424. From this passage one might get the impression that Bellarmine had been blissfully unaware of the things his beloved *populus* could do when given a free rein. The answer is that he had personal and very terrible experiences of a 'French revolution.' Moreover, he was not entirely ignorant of ancient and contemporary history, that sixteenth-century history which was more packed with miseries and disasters, due to popular uprisings, than the nineteenth century itself.

[2] M. Cronin, *The Science of Ethics*, Dublin, 1917, vol. II, p. 503. Dr. Cronin, whose book is certainly one of the best ethical treatises in English, is very severe on the theory of Suarez and Bellarmine. It 'rests on a purely groundless assumption' and the main argument in support of it 'is based on a wholly mistaken view of the nature of political authority' (pp. 501, 502).

8. A less easily answered objection has, in recent times, found its way into the discussion. According to this, the doctrine of Bellarmine and Suarez cannot be reconciled with the official utterances of Pope Leo XIII and Pope Pius X. On 29 June 1881, Pope Leo issued an encyclical on political

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[1] Even Suarez' distinguished and most competent biographer, Père R. de Scorraille, S.J., deserted his hero's flag because, in addition to other reasons, he says: 'l'histoire nous montre que la forme démocratique est la plus rare, surtout dans les temps les plus reculés et les plus voisins de l'origine des sociétés. Comment expliquer ce fait, si la forme démocratique fut toujours la forme initiale? . . .' *François Suarez*, t. II (1913), pp. 179–180. Suarez did not say that the earliest form of government was always democratic. He was not speaking about *forms* of government at all, and he was about as much a democrat, in the modern, unpleasant, sense of the word, as Père de Scorraille himself, which was very little indeed.

authority and power, known from its first words as the *Diuturnum illud*. In it were condemned several false theories of civil society and the authority of the State. The theories which the Holy Father had directly in view were those, as he was careful to point out, of 'the many moderns who walked in the footsteps of the self-styled philosophers of the eighteenth century, from whom Catholics differ.'[1] In other words, it was the doctrine of Rousseau and his disciples old and new that was condemned. Now no critic of the scholastic theory, propounded and defended by Bellarmine and Suarez, would go to the extreme of saying that it was an anticipation of the *Contrat Social*. Indeed, it would hardly be too much to say that the two theories are in almost every detail diametrically opposed, as may be seen from a summary description of their main points:

Rousseau	*Bellarmine—Suarez*
1° Civil society is not natural but the result of a purely conventional contract, and so is based on free consent.	1° Civil society is natural, and not conventional nor based on free consent.
2° Its authority as well as its existence comes from free consent, and in no sense has it its origin from God, nor is it in any sense dependent on Him.	2° Its authority, considered in the abstract, does not come from the free consent of the people but from God alone; considered in its first recipient, that is in the people as a whole, it does not come from them but from God alone; considered in the ruler, it comes from God through the people's consent.
3° The essential constituents of authority are the individual rights of the people, as ceded to the ruler, the authority of the ruler being simply the sum of these individual rights.	3° The essential constituents of authority in the State are not the individual rights of the people. They are a distinct effect of which God is the immediate and sole cause. Consequently, authority in the ruler is not the sum of the people's individual rights.

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[1] The complete text of the *Diuturnum illud* is in the *Acta* of Pope Leo XIII, published by Desclée of Bruges, vol. 1, pp. 211–214.

Rousseau	*Bellarmine—Suarez*
4° The authority comes from the people to the ruler in such a way that he cannot use it as his own.	4° The ruler uses his authority as his own, and it is his own.
5° The ruler is the mere mandatory and delegate of the people.	5° The ruler is not the mere mandatory of the people. Once placed in power he is entirely independent, within constitutional limits, of any control by the people. He is the minister of God and has as peremptory a claim to obedience in all things right and reasonable, as the law of God itself.
6° The people can withdraw the authority from the ruler whenever they wish.	6° The authority of the ruler is *per se*, and apart from constitutional agreement, placed in his hands permanently, and the people cannot withdraw it whenever they wish.

Even the most determined opponent of the Bellarmine-Suarez position would admit that it is in no way affected by the condemnation of the propositions in the left column above. In this connection the following point is of interest. It is believed, and there is good evidence for the belief, that the man who drafted the text of the *Diuturnum illud* was Cardinal Zigliara, the distinguished Dominican philosopher, and intimate friend of Pope Leo XIII. Now in his admirable and widely-used *Summa Philosophica*, which was published five years before the encyclical, Zigliara goes out of his way to prove that the scholastic doctrine of civil authority is fundamentally different from that of Rousseau and the rationalists. He names four scholastic writers as typical of the rest, Vittoria, Soto, Bellarmine, and Suarez, and quotes a passage from Bellarmine to enforce his argument. Nevertheless, he says that he is ready to admit a certain obscurity in their teaching, an obscurity ‘ for which they will be readily forgiven when it is remembered that political questions were not agitated in their day as they are now.’ Coming to the point, he inquires why the Scholastics, 'in the style of the rationalists,' made the people the subject of civil authority, and suggests that if they had been writing in the nineteenth century instead of the sixteenth, they would have been more cautious in their positive statements, and would have excluded all equivocal interpretation of their words by the employment of careful distinctions.

A diligent study of their work leads him to the following conclusions: They considered the State in the abstract, and consequently its individual members and the authority vested in it, also in the abstract. From this exclusively abstract consideration they deduced, (1) the perfect equality of individuals, (2) the non-existence in any man, regarded simply as an individual member of the State, of a right to command others, (3) the consequent fact that the right to command must in some way belong to the State as a whole, (4) the further fact that since this right, being immediately from God, cannot be in the State *ut in subjecto generativo*,[1] nor in it *ut in subjecto exercente*, because the State as a whole is incompetent to wield the authority, therefore it must be in the State *ut in principio seu subjecto determinante*. The meaning of the last phrase is that the people as a whole have power to designate the person or persons who shall rule over them, but that they do not confer on the person or persons chosen the authority that belongs to the office of ruler, for such authority comes immediately from God.[2]

The italicized words in the following passages from the *Diuturnum illud* are often taken as proof that Zigliara had imported his own view in detail into the encyclical, and as that view is generally considered to be irreconcilable with Bellarmine's, the same words have furnished the opponents of the old scholastic theory with what they consider to be a most useful engine of war:

> Very many men of more recent times, walking in the footsteps of those who in a former age assumed to themselves the name of philosophers, say that all power comes from the people; so that those who exercise it in the State do so not as their own, but as delegated to them by the people, and that, by this rule, it can be revoked by the will of the very people by whom it was delegated. But from these Catholics dissent, who affirm that the right to rule is from God, as from a natural and necessary principle.

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[1] That is, it cannot be in the State as if, in Rousseau's sense, the State itself had given rise to it.

[2] *Summa Philosophica*, Paris ed., 1887, vol. III, pp. 245–246.

> But it is of importance to remark in this place that those who may be placed over the State may in certain cases be chosen by the will and decision of the multitude, without opposition to or impugning of the Catholic doctrine. *And by this choice, in truth, the prince is designated, but the rights of princedom are not thereby conferred; nor is the authority delegated to him, but the person by whom it is to be exercised is determined upon.*[1]
>
> There is no question here respecting forms of government, for there is no reason why the Church should not approve of the chief power being held by one man or by more, provided only it be just, and that it tend to the common advantage. Wherefore, so long as justice be respected, the people are not hindered from choosing for themselves that form of government which suits best either their own disposition, or the institutions and customs of their ancestors.
>
> But as regards political power, the Church rightly teaches that it comes from God, for she finds this clearly testified in the sacred Scriptures and in the monuments of antiquity; besides, no other doctrine can be conceived which is more agreeable to reason, or more in accord with the safety of both princes and peoples.[2]

On 25 August 1910, Pope Pius X renewed the censures, and re-affirmed the positive teachings of his illustrious predecessor, in the letter on the *Sillon* which he addressed to the French Bishops.[3] With such documents as their guides not a few Catholic writers have been led to conclusions of which the following is a typical expression: 'Though Bellarmine's thesis has not been condemned, it must inevitably lose ground in Catholic schools after the Popes have so clearly defended the opposite opinion.'[4]

9. A careful study of Blessed Robert's pages shows, we think, that Cardinal Zigliara was quite justified in accusing him of 'a certain obscurity,'[5] but it also shows, if we are not mistaken, that the alleged difference between his teaching and that of the Popes is due entirely to an illegitimate interpretation of their encyclicals. As has been seen, he taught with emphasis that all true human authority, considered in the abstract and

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[1] 'Quo sane delectu designatur princeps, non conferuntur jura principatus: neque mandatur imperium, sed statuitur a quo sit gerendum.' The italics in the above translation of this passage are not in the original.

[2] Translation from the *Tablet*, 16 July 1881, vol. LVIII, p. 109.

[3] The letter on the *Sillon*, which was written in French, is to be found in the *Acta Apostolicae Sedis*, 1910, vol. II, pp. 607–633. The passages referring to political authority occur on pp. 615–616.

[4] M. Levesque, *Précis de Philosophie*, t. II (1913), p. 439.

[5] That all political theory, not excluding even Taparelli's and Zigliara's, is full of obscurity and latent paradox is well shown in the fine chapter on sovereignty in Professor Laski's *Grammar of Politics*, pp. 44–88.

apart from particular persons or groups of persons in whom it may be vested, comes immediately from God and from God alone. No text is so often on the Cardinal's pages as the great Pauline one which is the charter of all true liberty—*non est potestas nisi a Deo.* This power, on the possession of which a State is dependent for its existence, must be conceived as being radically and primarily inherent in the State itself, for, positive law apart, no reason can be shown why any particular individual or group of individuals should possess it. Since, however, it cannot be exercised by the citizens in a body, the law of nature, which is only another expression for the will of God, obliges them to transfer the authority, originally vested in themselves, to some one man or some few. The authority which they transfer is not theirs in the sense of Rousseau, as if it had emanated somehow from their collective wills. It comes entirely from God, and when it has been transferred to the ruler it does not continue to reside formally in the community. Whether Bellarmine held that it remained even *in habitu*, is a disputable point, but if he did, all that he meant was that the community retained the right to change its form of government if a just and sufficient reason could be alleged for doing so. This proposition is only another way of stating what Pope Leo XIII declared to be quite in accord with Catholic doctrine, namely 'that those who may be placed over the State may in certain cases be chosen by the will and decision of the multitude.'

Moreover, Pius X indicated the exact sense in which the theory of the inalienable sovereignty of the people was condemned: 'The *Sillon* does not abolish political authority,' he said. 'On the contrary, it considers it necessary, but it wishes to share it out, or rather to multiply it in such a fashion that each citizen would become a sort of king.' Neither Bellarmine nor Suarez ever dreamt of defending such principles. Bellarmine was perfectly explicit on the point. Once a form of government has been established, the community as such has no further control. The authority is the government's own, and the government is in no sense the mere mandatory or delegate of the community. Its laws bind the consciences of the people in the same way as they are bound by the law of God, and to stir up rebellion or sedition against it is to be guilty of the most serious crime.

So far, it will be agreed that he has nothing whatever in common with the condemned theories of *Philosophes* and

Sillonistes. Now it remains to be seen whether his method of explaining the presence of political authority in a determinate ruler can be reconciled with the doctrine of the Popes. Leo XIII taught that though in certain cases the people may legitimately choose their rulers or form of government, yet this choice does not confer the authority or right to govern, but only designates the person or persons who shall possess the right. Bellarmine, on the other hand, says that particular rulers derive their authority from the consent of the people, because the people *transfer* to them the authority that originally belonged to the community as a whole.

It has to be remembered, in the discussion of this matter, that the avowed purpose of Leo XIII was to condemn the theory of Rousseau and his modern disciples. Consequently, what the Pope did or did not intend to teach in particular passages of the encyclical can be determined only by keeping in mind the general import of that document. When he says that the choice of the people designates the prince but does not confer the rights of princedom, we are entitled by the laws of sound hermeneutics to conclude that he is here ruling out, not the transference of power by the people in Bellarmine's sense, but the delegation of authority in the sense of Rousseau. If it be said in answer to this that Zigliara, who drew up the encyclical, did not admit the legitimacy of Bellarmine's view, we reply that before such a circumstance could make any difference in the debate, it would have to be proved that the Dominican Cardinal had really embodied his private opinions in a Papal document, opinions moreover that were in opposition to the common teaching of Catholic theologians and philosophers during some hundreds of years. On the face of it, it is very unlikely indeed that Cardinal Zigliara did any such thing.

When Pope Leo wrote, *quo sane delectu designatur princeps, non conferuntur jura*, he was merely stating what the ' Catholici homines ', referred to a few lines earlier, held as against Rousseau and his disciples, namely the teaching of St. Paul that there is no power except from God. Consequently the power of the prince comes to him from God, but the Pope expresses no opinion as to whether it comes mediately or immediately. If he had written, ' *tantum* designatur princeps,' or at the end of the sentence, ' *tantum* statuitur a quo sit [imperium] gerendum,' then we might begin to ask whether Bellarmine's view had not been set aside by implication. As the passage stands, since the words ‘ conferuntur jura principatus ’ and ‘ mandatur imperium ’ describe Rousseau’s system, so must we suppose that ‘ designatur princeps ’ and ‘ statuitur a quo sit gerendum ’ describe the theory of the ‘ Catholici homines,’ mentioned as a general class and not as any particular school of philosophers.

The fundamental principle on which Bellarmine proceeded was the very one that occasioned the encyclicals of Popes Leo XIII and Pius X, their purpose being to vindicate Catholic teaching on the divine origin of civil authority. The Cardinal’s whole theory is summed up in the following sentences from his own pen : *Hic observanda sunt aliqua. Primo, politicam potestatem in universum consideratam, immediate esse a Deo. Secundo, hanc potestatem immediate esse tamquam in subjecto, in tota multitudine. Tertio, hanc potestatem transferri a multitudine in unum vel plures eodem jure naturae : nam Respublica non potest per seipsam exercere hanc potestatem : ergo tenetur eam transferre in aliquem unum, vel aliquos paucos ;* ET HOC MODO POTESTAS PRINCIPUM, IN GENERE CONSIDERATA, EST ETIAM DE JURE NATURAE ET DIVINO.

To conclude the matter, authority in itself, according to Bellarmine, is immediately from God, that is, its moral essence, its obligatoriness, its claim on conscience, is founded entirely on God’s will. Authority, on the other hand, as wielded by a particular ruler, by a king or prince or parliament, is founded also, in a true sense, on the will of the community, because the community by setting up a particular form of government has created particular conditions according to which the authority must be exercised. Its claim on consciences is as before immediately from God, but the extent of the claim, the sphere within which obedience is a duty on the part of the citizens, is now defined. When Bellarmine pointed to the difference between the authority vested in a Pope and the authority vested in a secular ruler as consisting in the fact that the one came immediately from God, whereas the other came from God only through the choice and consent of man, his meaning was plainly as follows. The Cardinals in electing a Pope do nothing more than designate a man on whom God then directly confers authority. That authority has, indeed, well-defined limits of its own, but those limits have been set by God Himself. The Cardinals cannot change or condition them in any way, their prerogative being one of pure and simple designation.

When, on the other hand, a community of men elect a ruler, or tacitly consent to be ruled by one whom they have not elected, the man of their choice or the man to whom they submit is always a ruler of a particular kind. Such a thing as an absolutely autocratic monarch, possessed of unlimited power, is a phenomenon unknown to history. Rules, customs, and other traditional expressions of the community's will, keep even the authority of a despot within some measure of control. In other words, all governments are to some extent constitutional governments. Their authority is limited both as to the way in which, and as to the objects on which it can be exercised, and this limitation is the direct effect, not of the natural law, but of the will of the community. When the citizens of a State choose a particular form of government they do not merely designate a man or men who shall have authority from God to rule over them. They designate a man who shall rule over them in a particular way, and possess authority of a particular kind. The authority, as authority, comes immediately from God and is not conferred by them, but the mode in which it appears, the fact that it is found in this particular person or group of persons, and limited as to exercise in this particular way, may without the least opposition to the teaching of Leo XIII be said to be the direct result of their free choice. That, and that alone, was what Bellarmine meant when he said that political power, as it is found in a particular ruler, comes from God through the consent and election of the people.[1]

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[1] Far from losing ground, this doctrine was flourishing in the chief universities and seminaries of Rome itself forty years after the issue of the *Diuturnum illud*. A distinguished Professor of the Biblical Institute made an inquiry about the subject in 1921. 'I did not find anyone,' he wrote, 'who did not admit the probability of the common scholastic doctrine as expounded by Suarez, or who considered that any pontifical pronouncements were directed against it, or rendered it untenable. The Suarezian doctrine is taught by the Professor of Ethics at the Benedictine International College (Dom Gredt, whose manual on Philosophy is very highly appreciated elsewhere in the Eternal City), by Dr. Ronayne, Professor of Ethics at the Carmelite International College, and by the five Professors who form the entire staff of the Faculty of Canon Law at the Gregorian University. . . . A professor who held the Suarezian view said, when I asked his opinion : "Why everybody holds the Suarezian doctrine now," alluding to the influence of the world war, which has turned the tide again in favour of Suarez. . . .' Letter of Edmond Power, S.J., cited in the now defunct *Irish Theological Quarterly*, October 1921, pp. 319–320. The controversy on the question of Bellarmine, Suarez, and the Popes, which went on in the pages of this excellent and regretted periodical between Edward Masterson, S.J., and John Fitzpatrick, D.D., was both lively and instructive. Dr. Fitzpatrick, as *advocatus diaboli*, pressed his objections very skilfully and Father Masterson met them in a brilliant and convincing way.

CHAPTER XII

THE TWO SWORDS

> At illi dixerunt ; Domine ecce duo gladii hic.
> At ille dixit eis : Satis est.
> *Luc.* xxii. 38.

1. We have dealt in the previous chapter with one thorny politico-religious question, as it presented itself to Robert Bellarmine, and now another, still thornier, claims our attention—the power of the Pope in temporals. The very conception of an independent spiritual authority having claims and a sphere of its own, distinct from the claims and sphere of the secular State, was unknown to pagan jurisprudence. Christianity was the first religion to make real the distinction between the two powers, the spiritual and the temporal, but she succeeded in obtaining recognition for its reality only after a stern struggle in which the blood of her martyrs was her argument. That distinction is, in a very true sense, the Magna Charta of consciences, the great bulwark of spiritual liberty against the aggressions of secular autocracy in every form. Naturally enough, princes and politicians imbued with the secular spirit have never been fond of it, and at times have striven very hard to obliterate it altogether. The Middle Ages witnessed many such struggles, but so far was the Church from succumbing and losing her independence that under a succession of strong Popes, from Gregory VII to Boniface VIII, she was even in a position to dictate terms and lay down the law to many powerful kings and emperors. If in some cases the Popes pushed their victories to what many historians would rightly or wrongly call extremes, it might fairly be urged on their behalf that they were under the stern necessity of defending the Church against the ruthless forces that perpetually menaced her freedom.[1]

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[1] Two large volumes of the *Spicilegium Sacrum Lovaniense*, published recently, throw a flood of new light on the policy of Gregory VII. They

The confused and seemingly endless conflicts between Popes and Emperors naturally caused theologians and lawyers to inquire how the contestants stood to each other in the light of tradition and political philosophy. Was the relation between the spiritual and the temporal powers, one of strict equality, each supreme and independent in its own sphere, or was one power in any way subordinate to the other? Experience showed clearly that the authority of the Pope and the authority of the Emperor did not, as it were, run on parallel lines. They could not do so because the spheres which they respectively controlled often overlapped. Pope and Emperor had the same subjects, and in their government of these subjects many cases of 'marginal' jurisdiction would arise, belonging, in a different relation, to both the spiritual and the secular domains. What theory would cover such complications and prevent, if admitted, the recurrence of disputes? That was the great question, a question which some medieval theologians and jurists answered in a very radical way.

The Pope, they said, was given by God supreme authority in temporal as well as spiritual matters. In his hands were placed the two swords, spoken of in the Gospel of St. Luke, the sword of spiritual power to be wielded personally, and, the temporal sword to be committed to secular rulers, who must use it under his direction. That was one theory put forward during the Middle Ages. Whether it was the only or the accepted theory, we shall see later. However extravagant it may look, history would almost justify us in describing its framers as 'good men who had good reason to be wrong.' On the morrow of the Reformation we find an exactly opposite theory in possession outside the Catholic Church. The doctrine of the Divine Right of Kings, which is not in itself contrary to Christian principles, had been moulded in the stress of religious conflict into a theory of state absolutism as complete as had prevailed in the pagan empires of the past. *Cujus regio ejus religio* became the motto. Every ruler was to

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are Augustin Fliche's *La Réforme grégorienne* (Louvain-Paris, 1924), and the same author's *Grégoire VII* (Louvain-Paris, 1925). Along with them may be mentioned *Les Papes du XI^e Siècle et la Chrétienté*, an admirable study by Jules Gay, Professor at the University of Lille (Paris, 1926). On Innocent III, Dr. E. Amann's article in Vacant-Mangenot's *Dictionnaire de théologie catholique*, t. VII, coll. 1976 sqq., provides plenty of instruction, while about Boniface VIII, Jean Rivière's, *Le problème de l'Église et de l'État au temps de Philippe le Bel* (Paris-Louvain, 1926), may be consulted with profit.

be also a pope within his dominions, the keeper of both swords and the supreme authority in things spiritual as well as things temporal.

2. When Bellarmine, in the course of his argument, came to deal with the problems arising out of the existence of two ' perfect ' societies side by side in the world, the rival solutions mentioned immediately confronted him. His first few paragraphs on the matter are a brusque rejection of both. Three chapters are then devoted to proving the negative propositions that follow: (1) *Papam non esse Dominum totius Mundi*, (2) *Papam non esse Dominum totius Orbis Christiani*, (3) *Papam non habere ullam mere temporalem jurisdictionem directe jure divino*. The theories which he here denies, namely that the Pope was immediately and directly the temporal Lord of the world or at least of the Christian world, were held in medieval times, he says, by the theologians Augustinus Triumphus of Ancona, and Alvarus Pelagius, as well as by many lawyers, among whom were Henry of Segusia, Panormitanus, Sylvester, ' et alii non pauci.' What St. Thomas thought is not so clear. While admitting his obscurity, Blessed Robert earnestly endeavours to show that the most representative of the Church's theologians cannot rightly be claimed as an advocate of the extreme view. He dismisses the counter-arguments, drawn chiefly from the later books of the treatise *De Regimine Principum*, by proving from internal evidence that these books could not have been written by St. Thomas—a conclusion accepted by everybody in modern times.

Not all modern writers, however, are willing to endorse his main contention, that the theory of the Pope's direct temporal jurisdiction was not in any sense the official or generally-accepted doctrine of the medieval Church. The weightiest attack on the contention is to be found in the famous essay of Gierke which was translated into English by the late Professor Maitland under the title, *Political Theories of the Middle Ages*. Gierke there accumulates an impressive quantity of texts which, according to him, show that the Popes had laid claim to the plenitude of all power, worldly as well as spiritual, and that the common opinion of the later Middle Ages had admitted the claim.[1] The two men who provide the largest number of references are those named by Bellarmine, Augustinus of Ancona and Alvarus Pelagius. St. Thomas figures by a few quotations, notably a clause from his commentary on the Book of Sentences in which he speaks of the Pope as one 'qui utriusque potestatis apicem tenet, sc. spiritualis et saecularis.' Among the Popes themselves who are cited as having put forward the tremendous claim, we find, as was to be expected, Gregory VII, Innocent III, and Boniface VIII.

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[1] P. 108. The references and quotations are given in the notes, pp. 105–118.

Dr. Gierke wrote with assurance, but Bellarmine's chapters prepared by anticipation a rather damaging commentary on his line of argument. The point is not whether a number of Popes acted apparently as if they believed themselves to be possessed of direct temporal jurisdiction over all other Christian rulers, but whether throughout the Middle Ages the direct power was the theory taught in explicit terms by the majority of canon lawyers and theologians. Practically every important passage Gierke produces in support of this contention is paralleled in Bellarmine's Controversies by another passage from the same pen, which speaks in an opposite sense. St. Thomas may have said that in the Pope is to be found the pinnacle of both powers, but he also said that the exemption of clerics from taxation was a privilege conceded to them by the civil rulers [1] and the implications of this statement do not tally with the meaning that has been read into the other. Moreover, continues Bellarmine, it is not at all certain that the phrase, 'apicem utriusque potestatis,' must necessarily be interpreted to include direct temporal jurisdiction outside the States of the Church. The words have to be read in their context. St. Thomas had said a little earlier that in matters pertaining to salvation the spiritual rather than the secular power was to be obeyed, whereas in purely civil affairs the secular power has the prior claim. Then he gives as an exception to his rule, 'nisi forte potestati spirituali etiam saecularis potestas conjungatur, sicut in Papa, qui utriusque potestatis apicem tenet'. Taking the rule and the exception together, it is quite arguable that the Saint may have intended, and probably did intend, the latter to apply to the Pope only in his capacity as supreme temporal ruler of the States of the Church. Another point which Blessed Robert urges in favour of this interpretation has the value of an independent argument. It is the unanimity of St. Thomas's best commentators in their denial of direct temporal jurisdiction to the Holy See. Some of the names which are given are of interest. Petrus

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[1] *Commentarius in Epistolas omnes Pauli,* in cap. xiii ad Rom.

Paludanus, the Dominican Patriarch of Jerusalem, for instance, wrote his treatise *De causa immediata ecclesiasticae potestatis* in 1329, or within a decade of the dates when both Augustinus Triumphus and Alvarus Pelagius gave their works to the world. Yet he quite disagrees with them, and he was a distinguished ecclesiastic, whereas they were but simple friars.[1]

Bellarmine is not willing to surrender even Augustinus and his invariable companion in footnotes, Alvarus. ‘ It would not be difficult,’ he says, ‘ to bring them into line with the other writers,’ and the passages which he then cites from each certainly go far to prove the correctness of his contention. Other writers, quoted by Gierke as apologists of Papal pretensions, are examined by Blessed Robert in the same calm, judicial way, and with the same result. The man who had continued the treatise *De Regimine Principum*, left unfinished by St. Thomas, is prominent in the German scholar's list. He is also prominent in Bellarmine, but not as a champion of the direct power.[2] Nor are the documents of the Popes forgotten, especially the *Unam Sanctam*. Pope Boniface certainly laid claim in it to the control of the two swords, but in doing so, the Cardinal points out, he was merely following, indeed almost quoting, St. Bernard, who was one of the first to employ the Gospel phrase as a metaphor for the spiritual and temporal powers. Consequently, if we are to interpret the Pope aright we must go to St. Bernard for guidance. Now so far was the Saint from teaching that the Pope possessed direct temporal jurisdiction, that the words of his which gave Pope Boniface his cue were an urgent appeal to Eugenius III *not* to claim nor try to exercise any such power (*De consid.*, *lib. iv.*).[3]

This is not to say that Blessed Robert has completely vindicated the medieval Popes and their supporters against the charges of arrogance and tyranny which, in his day as in our own, were freely levelled at them. There are more elements in the problem than he took into account. To judge from the actions and character of Boniface VIII, it is likely that he did hold, as a private opinion, that he had direct authority even in the temporal affairs of secular states. Remembering his life-and-death struggle with the grasping tyrant, Philip the Fair, perhaps we might in justice say of him too, that he was a man who had ' good reason to be wrong.' The only matter which he defined as an article of faith in his famous Bull, was that ' for every human creature it is necessary for salvation to be subject to the authority of the Roman Pontiff.' That was only another way of stating a truth which the Catholic Church has always proclaimed—*extra ecclesiam nulla salus*. It does not mean and was never intended to be accepted as meaning that in order to be saved we must believe the Holy See to be invested with direct temporal authority over the whole world.

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[1] Dr. Gierke quotes or gives references to Augustinus Triumphus eighteen times and to Alvarus Pelagius twenty times, in the space of a dozen pages. No other writers receive nearly so much attention, the plain reason being that no other writers were to be found who spoke with anything like their positiveness.

[2] *De Summo Pontifice*, lib. v, cap. v, arg. postremum.

[3] A whole chapter is devoted to the defence of Pope Gregory VII, whom, Blessed Robert tells us, the heretics of his day detested more than any other of the Popes. ‘ The Centuriators call him always, not Gregory which was his Papal name, nor Hildebrand which was his name before he became Pope, but Hellebrand, which means in German a firebrand of Hell.’ *L.c.*, lib. IV, cap. xiii.

In dealing with the difficult problem now under consideration, it has to be remembered that words are not things with absolute and unvarying meanings. The meaning of an individual word or phrase might be described in the language of mathematics as a function of its context, and the context of the *Unam Sanctam* was, in its widest sense, nothing less than the medieval world-order. The theology of that age, its philosophy, its social organization, the historical forces that moulded it, have all to be taken into account before we can be certain that our strictures on men like Boniface VIII are entirely justified. Moreover, when theorists such as Augustinus Triumphus speak in what appear to be extravagant terms about the superior jurisdiction of the Pope as compared with that of the Emperor, or when Popes themselves claim rights over his election and control of his policy, we have to be careful to avoid the anachronism of regarding the secular head of the *Respublica Christiana* as a mere ruler among rulers, a monarch such as King George of England or King Albert of Belgium. In the Middle Ages, there was and could be only one Emperor, just as there was and could be only one Pope. Nor was the Emperor considered to be a purely temporal sovereign. His office was a quasi-ecclesiastical one entailing duties to the Church of a very special kind. Consequently, it is not legitimate to take all the strong things which the old theologians and canonists said concerning his subservience to the Holy See, and argue as if they had been intended to apply indiscriminately to all secular authorities. Nor is it legitimate, either, to turn people like Augustinus Triumphus and Alvarus Pelagius into Doctors of the Church. Bellarmine's few pages on the question were based on the best history known to him. It may be doubted whether it was always very good history, but in any case his words have value if only as a warning against the 'raisonnement simpliste,' from which even Dr. Gierke's famous chapter is not free.

3. As will be seen later in this book, Blessed Robert had to suffer for his strong opposition to the theory which gave the Pope direct temporal power, but so little was he inclined on that account to alter his opinions or to make the slightest concession, that he took every opportunity that arose to attack the theory afresh. In the year 1599, a certain theologian named Alexander Carerius published a book entitled, *De Potestate Romani Pontificis adversus impios Politicos*. The work, which was written with a flourish, was dedicated to the Papal Legate in Ferrara, the Cardinal of St. Clement. Bellarmine devoured its contents as soon as he was able to acquire a copy—*avide perlegi*. To his astonishment, he discovered that a great many chapters dealing with the spiritual prerogatives of the Pope were taken almost word for word, and without any acknowledgment, from his own published writings. But a bigger surprise awaited him, for when Carerius turned from pure exposition to attack those whom he considered to be the enemies of the Papacy, Blessed Robert found that his name, like Abou Ben Adhem's, led all the rest. This was, of course, because he had denied direct temporal power to the Pope. Being human, and by nature hot-tempered, he strongly resented the implications of his critic and at once wrote an *Epistola Apologetica* to the Cardinal who had been honoured with the dedication of the book, in which were pilloried most unmercifully the 'thefts, abuse, errors, ignorance, rudeness, and audacity' of Carerius.[1]

'Here is a man', he says, 'who, though he appeared to be such a bosom friend of Bellarmine that relying on the old saw, *Amicorum omnia sunt communia*, he appropriated his goods, yet suddenly turns hostile and cries anathema to his benefactor.' And I am not the only one, he continues, whom he visits with his thunders. Among the impious *politiques*, stigmatized in his title, whom he equivalently accuses of a sort of Manichaeism because they distinguish between spiritual and temporal authority, are the following great theologians: Hugh of St. Victor, Alexander of Hales, Thomas Waldensis, John Driedo, John Torquemada, Thomas Cajetan, Albert Pighius, Francis Vittoria, Dominic Soto, Nicholas Sanders, and several others:

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[1] The letter is given by Le Bachelet, *Auctarium Bellarminianum*, pp. 426–435. The treatise against which it was a protest was prohibited by a decree of the Holy Office, 19 July 1600.

> I have not yet come to his arguments. I am merely inquiring who it is that says anathema to whom. What an impertinence it is, in a theological discussion, for a canonist to pronounce anathema on theologians, a simple parish priest on cardinals, an ignoramus on men of profound learning, an individual on a whole school! However, truth must be preferred to both dignities and numbers, so let us see whether it is verity or vanity that is the support of our censor.

A terrible indictment follows, in the course of which Bellarmine says that he will not refute but merely enumerate the theological errors in the book, for fear of his letter never coming to an end.

His account and criticism of some proofs provided by Carerius show that that champion of direct temporal power had an original mind:

> So silly are they that it looks as if he meant them for a joke. Thus on page 51 he argues as follows: Temporal things have no productive principle distinct from the productive principle of spiritual things, and to say that they had would be to fall into the heresy of the Manichaeans, who taught that all corporeal substances were not from God but from the devil. Therefore, it must be admitted that the Pope, who holds the place of God on earth, derives power over temporal things from the same source as he derives his power over spiritual things. *Egregiam vero demonstrationem!* As if God could not be the Creator of all things, were it His will that temporal affairs should be controlled by kings and spiritual matters by priests. What if some one were to argue: Corporeal and spiritual substances both come from God; therefore they cannot be separated; therefore angels without bodies are an impossibility, and so too are earth, air, fire, water, stones, plants, in fact all material things which have no spirits. What, I ask, has Carerius to say in reply to this?

Another argument, this time soritical in shape, ran like the story of the house that Jack built: The end and purpose of the State is happiness. Now happiness depends on true virtue, true virtue depends on religion, and religion depends on the Pope, *ergo* it must be admitted that the Pope has supreme power both ecclesiastical and political throughout the world.

> Who could ever tell [is Bellarmine's comment] which is the middle term joining the end of this proof to its beginning? What kind of new dialectic is this in which whatever you like is a conclusion from whatever you please—*in qua quodlibet infertur ex quolibet*?

He next inquires into the meaning of the word 'religion' in his critic's argument. If it means the moral virtue of religion, it is not true to say 'religionis caput est Summus Pontifex.' If the Christian Church is meant, then it is not true to say that virtue depends on religion, and so, however the word be interpreted, the argument as stated has no sense. Put into proper shape, he continues, it would run somewhat as follows:

> The ultimate end of human government from God's point of view is the eternal happiness of human beings. This cannot be reached except by supernatural virtue. Supernatural virtue, in its perfect form, is not to be found outside the Christian Church of which the Pope is the head. These points granted, it is legitimate to conclude only that all states, and consequently all men, must, if they wish to be saved, be subject to the Pope in matters which are connected with supernatural virtue and the attainment of everlasting happiness. That was what Pope Boniface VIII defined in the Bull *Unam Sanctam*.

Blessed Robert was very fond of St. Bernard's work *De Consideratione*, which was written to provide Pope Eugenius III with a 'spiritual director' that could be consulted at any hour of the day or night. He quotes two passages from it against Carerius, the second of which brings us to his own theory on the temporal jurisdiction of the Papacy. St. Bernard comments allegorically as follows on the texts that tell how St. Peter walked upon the sea:

> What is the meaning of this incident? It is a sign of Peter's singular pontifical power inasmuch as he took to himself not, like the others, the captaincy of a single ship but the government of the world. For the sea is the world and the ships are the Churches. Thus walking upon the waters like his Master, he manifested that he was the Vicar of Christ who must rule not one people but all nations. The many waters are the many nations. While each of the others has his own ship, to thee [Eugenius] was committed

one mighty bark, composed of them all, namely the universal Church spread throughout the whole world.

Bellarmine invites his critic to study these words carefully. St. Bernard speaks of St. Peter as having committed to him the government of the world, but lest any one should mistakenly think that he had temporal government in view, he goes on immediately to explain what he meant, using the metaphor of a vast ship for the universal Church :

> Accordingly, St. Bernard's point is that Peter was set over all peoples and kingdoms, and was given the sea itself, by which is meant the world, for his dominion. He was not, however, made a king or emperor of the earth but constituted the pastor and ruler of a Church spread over the earth. If Carerius and other men like him would give thought to such considerations and imitate the sobriety and restraint of the holy Fathers, they would not render ecclesiastical government hateful to secular princes, nor make Catholic dogmas look ridiculous in the eyes of heretics, by employing absurd arguments in proof of their private opinions.

In two other passages, the Cardinal shows in exactly what way he differs from the early and late champions of direct temporal jurisdiction. Neither Vittoria, he said, nor Soto nor Cajetan nor he himself, nor, indeed, any Catholic theologian, denied that the Pope was invested with power over both spiritual and temporal things and that, too, of the fullest and amplest kind:

> *Sed quaestio est de modo.* Has the Pope only one kind of power, namely spiritual, but which so excels all manner of temporal power that it gives its possessor a right to dispose of all temporal things *in ordine ad spiritualia*, or has he from God two distinct kinds of power, the one spiritual and the other temporal, so that St. Peter was constituted by Christ both supreme Pontiff and supreme King of all lands ?
>
> When the Church says of St. Peter that God has given all the kingdoms of the world into his hands, she speaks what is true but her words have to be rightly interpreted. Peter was, indeed, set over all peoples and kingdoms, but he was set over them in the way that became an Apostle. He was made Prince of the whole earth, and, according to the prophecy of Jeremias, he rooted out and destroyed, he planted and built up, but not as a king or emperor. It was as an Apostle that he did these things. It was by his preaching and by his miracles that he destroyed the kingdoms of the devil and established the Kingdom of Christ ; that he rooted out corrupt thoughts about God and planted the true faith. In virtue of the

same Apostolic power, he walked upon the sea, subjected the whole world to Christ, assumed its government, and transmitted as a heritage to his successors, the Roman Pontiffs, the care of instructing it, of providing for its needs, and of bringing it to everlasting salvation.[1]

4. In Bellarmine's eyes, as the previous chapter showed, secular power was as solid and good and necessary a thing as any other great beneficent power of nature. But he knew, too, by the eyes of faith, that there was a yet more excellent and necessary power in the world, a power directly commissioned by God to regulate, develop, and protect, the hidden supernatural life in each Christian soul. That life was the ultimate value on earth, the end of ends to the service of which all purely temporary purposes and conveniences must contribute. No Christian could deny this without denying the very basis of his creed. 'What shall it profit a man if he gain the whole world and suffer the loss of his own soul?' If, then, the salvation of souls is the supreme human concern, and if there is a power on earth directly charged by God with the responsibility of saving souls, that power must, in all reasonableness, have precedence over every other power when the welfare of souls is in question. Granted these premisses, only one conclusion is possible if we have the courage to keep to our logic. In Bellarmine's stately Latin it runs as follows:

> *Asserimus Pontificem ut Pontificem etsi non habeat ullam mere temporalem potestatem, tamen habere in ordine ad bonum spirituale summam potestatem disponendi de temporalibus rebus omnium Christianorum.*[2]

This is the famous theory of the indirect temporal power of the Pope, which is so often called the 'Bellarmine theory' in books. He was the first to elaborate and defend it in set terms but at the same time, as has been seen above, he heartily repudiated the suggestion that he was the first to hold it. Contrary to a common belief, he cannot even be credited with having coined the term 'indirect,' for, as he tells us himself, he borrowed it from Pope Innocent III. Name after venerable name is given by him of men who took the theory for granted in their arguments hundreds of years before he was born. In his very first chapter on the subject he mentions a score, with minute references in each case, and they were each and all men of greater distinction and authority in the Church than Augustinus Triumphus or Alvarus Pelagius.[1]

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[1] *Auctarium*, pp. 433–434.
[2] *De Summo Pontifice*, lib. v, cap. vi.

To explain his thought, the Cardinal makes use of a favourite illustration which he has borrowed from the Fathers and which, he says, was used earlier, in the same connection, by Hugh of St. Victor, the Englishman Thomas Waldensis, John Driedo, Vittoria, and Soto :

> The spiritual and temporal powers in the Church are related in the same way as spirit and flesh in man. For flesh and spirit are as it were two republics which may be found united or apart. The flesh has its senses and appetites with their corresponding acts and objects, all directed to the health and well-being of the body. The spirit likewise has its special equipment of will and intellect with acts and objects proportioned to these faculties, their purpose being the health and perfection of the soul. In brute beasts, only the republic of the flesh is to be found ; in angels, only that of the spirit. Neither, then, is necessarily or entirely for the sake of the other, and it is only when they coalesce, as in man, into the unity of a person that subordination becomes inevitable. The spirit then takes precedence, but nevertheless does not interfere with the autonomy of the flesh, except when its own high purposes are threatened by the encroachments of this restless partner. In such a case, the spirit declares war and inflicts fasting and other punishments, even to the extent of harming and weakening the body in some measure. Yea, even the mutilation and death of the flesh may at times be necessary, if the spirit is to attain its ends, and then these too are commanded, as we see in the case of the martyrs.
>
> In exactly the same way, political power has its princes, laws, justiciary organs, etc., and ecclesiastical power has its bishops, its code, and its courts. The end of the former power is temporal peace, and of the latter, eternal salvation. The two powers are sometimes to be found separate, as formerly in the days of the Apostles, and sometimes united, as in our own age. When they are united they form one body, and in this body the inferior power must necessarily be subordinate to the superior. The spiritual power does not permit itself to become involved in temporal affairs, but allows everything to proceed as if the union did not exist provided the activities of the temporal power do not hinder its spiritual aims or are not indispensably needed for the attainment of those aims. If such circumstances should arise, the spiritual power may and ought to coerce the temporal power by every means considered necessary.[2]

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[1] At the beginning of his later book against Barclay, he names as many as sixty authors who taught the opinion.

[2] *De Summo Pontifice*, lib. v, cap. vi.

Certain practical conclusions follow immediately from these principles, and Bellarmine sets them down in clear terms, without regard to the protests they might evoke both within and without the Church :

> The Pope has not the same kind of right to depose temporal princes, even though they might deserve to be deposed, as he has to depose bishops, that is as their legitimate, ordinary judge. Nevertheless, he may, as the supreme spiritual authority, dispose of kingdoms, taking away the power from one monarch and conferring it on another, if such a change be necessary for the salvation of souls. This is a point which we shall prove in due course.
>
> With regard to legislation, the Pope as Pope cannot ordinarily make any civil law, nor can he confirm or render void any law made by secular princes, because he is not their political suzerain. Nevertheless, he may do all these things should the salvation of souls require that a particular civil law be passed and the Prince be unwilling to pass it, or that a law be abrogated as harmful to religion and the Prince be unwilling to abrogate it. That is an excellent rule of jurisprudence which says : ‘ When about one and the same matter the laws of Emperor and Pope are found to be in opposition, if the matter in question is concerned with the salvation of souls, as involving danger to them, then the Imperial law is abrogated by that of the Pope ; if, on the other hand, the affair is one of purely temporal interest, the Papal law cannot cancel the Emperor's. . . .'
>
> Finally, with regard to the passing of judicial sentences, the Pope as Pope has no power to decide purely civil cases which might be brought to his notice. If, however, the spiritual welfare of souls is involved, he can act as a temporal judge supposing that there is no one else to assume the office. This might fall out when two supreme rulers are at war, or when those whose duty it is to act as judges refuse to give a decision. Pope Innocent III had the circumstance in mind when he wrote, *jurisdictionem temporalem solum casualiter Pontificem exercere.*

5. Having stated the theory and its practical implications, the Cardinal gives five proofs from reason in support of it, and twelve historical instances to show that it was this indirect temporal jurisdiction and no other, which the Popes consistently claimed and exercised from the beginning. If, in the stress of battle, any individual Pope spoke more strongly of his rights than the theory warranted, that was merely an eddy in the broad stream of tradition due to the rocks and shoals over which it passed. The proofs from reason are based on the conception of the Church as a juridically perfect society. The perfection of a society is determined by the nature of the end

which it pursues. If that end is a good thing, complete and perfect of its kind, not a part of nor a means to the attainment of any other good, then the society whose end it is, is a perfect society. Health, wealth, knowledge, liberty, etc., are all incompletely good things because they are only elements of a wider system of good, namely temporal happiness, and not separately sufficient to satisfy man's nature. The society which has temporal happiness for its end, on the other hand, is a perfect society, for temporal happiness is a complete and independent good of its kind, sufficient unto itself and not directed, as a means, to the attainment of any wider good of the same temporal order. Such a society is the secular State. That the Church is a perfect society, in the same sense, is the plain teaching of the New Testament. This is Bellarmine's great contention all through the first part of his Controversies. By the express will and disposition of her divine Founder, the Catholic Church has a distinct and complete end of her own, namely the everlasting, supernatural happiness of human souls. That good is in no way dependent on nor a means to any other good of the same order, and therefore the society whose end it is, is a perfect society.

Now from the fact that a society is perfect when it is self-sufficing and independent *in its own order*, it follows that the sufficiency and independence are not absolute but relative. They apply only to one particular kind of complete good. If there is another society whose end is a complete good of a different kind, then *in respect of this good* the former society must be indirectly dependent on it:

> That political power, not only as Christian but as political, is subordinate to ecclesiastical power, is proved by a consideration of their respective ends. A temporal end, such as that of the State, must obviously be subordinate to spiritual ends, because temporal happiness is not the ultimate purpose for which men were made and therefore must be directed towards that purpose, which is eternal happiness. As Aristotle says in the first chapter of his Ethics, faculties are subordinated according to the subordination of their ends.
>
> Now, Popes and princes, priests and people, together make one great Christian Republic which is the Church. We are all one body, says St. Paul, and in every body the members are mutually connected and dependent one upon another. It cannot, in reason, be asserted that the organs of spiritual power are dependent on the organs of temporal power and therefore the relation of dependence must be the other way about. A plain sign of this is the fact

that if the temporal administration hinders spiritual good, the prince is obliged, in the judgment of all men, to change that form of administration, even though temporal prosperity may suffer by the change. Nor will it do to say that the duty of the prince in this respect does not arise out of the subordination of the temporal to the spiritual, but is rather an obligation of charity, which requires that the greater good be preferred to the less. This is not so, because charity does not oblige one independent state to suffer temporal harm in order to shield another independent and nobler state from a similar disaster. Again, it is of equally little avail to say that the prince must in conscience suffer temporal evil to befall his state for the sake of spiritual good, not because the temporal power is subordinate to the spiritual, but because by acting otherwise he would injure his subjects. The proof that these explanations are incorrect lies in the fact that even if men who are not his subjects but the citizens of another state suffer notable spiritual harm from the administration of any Christian king, then that king is obliged in conscience to change his methods.[1]

6. Blessed Robert liked to argue on practical lines whenever he could. As soon as he has made his position good in the abstract, he comes immediately to earth to see how it works out in the hurly-burly of the world. A perfect society must have at its disposal all the power necessary for the attainment of its end. That follows from the very concept of a perfect society. Now comes the question, what sort of temporal power *is* necessary if the Church is to attain her spiritual end ? She must have power, he says boldly, to use and dispose of temporal things ' because otherwise bad princes might with impunity foster heresy and destroy true religion ' :

> Each state, because and in so far as it is perfect and self-sufficing, has a right and a duty . . . to compel other independent states to change their methods of administration, yea even to depose their ruler and set up someone else in his place, if that is the only means by which it can protect itself from aggression.[2] Still stronger is the right of the spiritual State, the Church, to command and compel the secular State to change its policy and depose its prince, *quando aliter non potest bonum suum spirituale tueri*. . . . Christians are not obliged to tolerate the rule of a non-Christian or heretical king when his government is a plain menace to their religion. Indeed, it is their duty to repudiate it, for if human law comes into conflict with the law of God, it is obviously the law of God that must be obeyed. Now the law of God commands that faith and true religion, which is one and not many, be preserved. On the other hand, that this

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[1] *De Summo Pontifice*, lib. v, cap. vii.

[2] The history of Napoleon Bonaparte is a good modern illustration.

man or that should be king of the State is a mere matter of human law.

This is the conclusion from his theory which let loose upon Blessed Robert's head all the thunders of gallicanism and regalism. The greater part of his life was to be spent in justifying it, and so far was he from being frightened by the clamour it raised that he wrote the following strong words in his unpublished book against Roger Widdrington :

> Quamvis enim fortasse quaeri possit utrum sententia negans [Papae potestatem deponendi reges] sit proprie dicenda haeresis directe et principaliter, tamen dubitari non potest quin sit temeraria, erronea et haeretica saltem reductive et secundario, ita ut sine periculo fidei catholicae defendi nequeat.[1]

7. Though the Cardinal was so emphatic in defence of the Pope's indirect temporal jurisdiction, he recognized perfectly well that its exercise must depend on the social and political conditions of each age. Were he writing at the present day, he would not insist on the deposing power, because, in accordance with his own principles, he would see that the use of that once famous prerogative of the Papacy would no longer serve the spiritual interests of mankind and so must be reckoned not to belong any more to the sphere within which the indirect power legitimately functions. Two short quotations about this matter may be of interest. The first is from the great non-Catholic philosopher, Leibniz, who was born within twenty-five years of the death of Bellarmine.

> Has the Pope [he asks] the power of deposing kings, and of absolving their subjects from their oath of allegiance ? It is a point that has often been discussed ; and Bellarmine's arguments, which deduce from the Pope's supposed spiritual jurisdiction, a jurisdiction at least indirect over temporalities, have not appeared contemptible even to Hobbes himself. In fact, it is certain that whoever has received from God power to procure the salvation of souls has a power of repressing the tyranny and ambition of the great, which destroy such a multitude of souls.[2]

The second quotation is from an allocution addressed to a Roman *Academia*, 20 July 1871, by Pope Pius IX. He was speaking about the various misrepresentations of the doctrine of Papal infallibility which were then current :

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[1] *Auctarium*, p. 368.

[2] *De Jure Suprematus* (Op. t. IV, pars. iii, p. 401). Cited in Gosselin's *The Power of the Pope during the Middle Ages*. Eng. tr., vol. II, p. 178.

The most malicious perversion of all is that which would include in the doctrine the right to depose sovereigns and set nations free from their duty of allegiance. This right was, indeed, exercised at times by the Popes, in extreme cases, but neither the claim to it nor the use of it have anything to do with Papal infallibility. Its source was not Papal infallibility but Papal authority. That authority, according to the public law then in force and by the agreement of Christian nations which reverenced in the Pope the supreme arbiter of Christendom, was considered competent to pass judgment on princes and individual states, even in civil cases.

Altogether different from such a social order is the condition of affairs at the present day, and only malice could confuse things and times so unlike ; as if an infallible decision concerning a principle of revealed truth, had any affinity with a right which by the will of Christendom the Popes were in duty bound to exercise when the common good demanded it. It is as clear as the day that malice alone is the explanation of such an absurd idea as that of including the [theory of the deposing power in the doctrine of infallibility]. No one any longer gives such an idea a second thought, least of all the Supreme Pontiff himself.[1]

After all its battles and buffetings, the theory of the indirect power defended by Bellarmine still holds the field in Catholic theology. Other theories have been suggested, notably by Fénélon and Gosselin, in which the Pope is supposed to have no temporal power direct or indirect, but only a moral right to exhort and advise secular rulers. To such views, Mgr. D'Hulst once applied the contemptuous phrase 'systèmes bâtards.'[2] They neither account for Papal action in the past nor provide its due safeguards for religion in the present, and so they have fallen into discredit together with the views, extreme in an opposite sense, of Augustinus Triumphus and Alvarus Pelagius. The Church herself has never pronounced dogmatically on the question but it might safely be asserted that so far as there can be said to be any distinctively Catholic theory at all, it is the one that flourishes under the name of Bellarmine. As recently as October 1926, a distinguished Continental scholar made bold to write : 'Bellarmin, sur ce point là, tout au moins, redevient tout à fait à la mode.'[3]

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[1] *La Civiltà Cattolica*, serie VIII, vol. III, fasc. 508, 12 agosto 1871.

[2] Cf. the excellent remarks of Mgr. D'Hulst, *Conférences de Notre Dame*, 1895, *La Morale du Citoyen*, pp. 374 sqq.

[3] *Revue des Sciences Religieuses*, (Université de Strasbourg), Jan. 1927, p. 547. The writer is Dr. E. Amann.

CHAPTER XIII

SIXTUS THE FIFTH

1. Hard, sometimes, is the lot of theologians. Bellarmine's first volume, which included his treatise on the Pope, was attacked as soon as it appeared by French lawyers because it conceded too much power to the Papacy, and shortly afterwards it was attacked by Roman canonists because it conceded too little. In the famous newspaper of the time, the *Mercure François*, we read the following item :

> Towards the close of the year 1586, the first volume of Bellarmine's Controversies, which had been printed at Ingolstadt was brought to France. A Lyons bookseller, named Etienne Michel, happened to be in Paris at the time and made arrangements with a brother in the trade to have the Controversies reprinted. But the attorney-general heard of their plan and sent the police to seize the sheets already in type, which numbered twenty-one.[1]

The other story is a longer and sadder one. When Bellarmine was professor at the Roman College, one of the many men whom he helped in their learned pursuits was the very poor and rather despised Cardinal Montalto. Montalto was not in favour with Gregory XIII, so he lived in retirement and gave an English visitor the impression of being 'the most crooching, humble, Cardinal that was ever lodged in an oven.'[2] Very few indeed, even of his intimates, guessed the volcanic energy that simmered beneath Fra Felice's rough Franciscan habit until one memorable morning in 1585 they woke to find that he was their Pope. Then the volcano erupted, and sleepy, nonchalant Rome discovered with startling rapidity that it was in the hands of one of the fieriest and most energetic men of whom history has record. He reigned only five years but in that brief space accomplished the work of half a century. The Eternal City was transformed as if by magic. Splendid monuments began to rise on every piece of vacant ground, St. Peter's dome was flung into the blue of heaven, the magnificent Vatican library was built, and a wonderful aqueduct soon brought water across twenty miles of hills and valleys to the people's doors. In the Papal States the banditti, who had so long defied the civil administration and terrorized the citizens, were mercilessly crushed. Vice was everywhere put down with a ruthless hand, while, on the economic side, the finances of the Papal exchequer were set in order and vast reserves of capital accumulated. In all these great undertakings Sixtus was his own prime-minister and secretary, and, at times, even his own architect. Nothing was too much for the energy that devoured him, and like the mighty Pontiffs of the past, Gregory VII, Innocent III, Paul IV, he had the imperious temper which generally marks men of action. His aim was to revive the splendour and influence of the medieval Papacy, and consequently he was not one to view with patience any attempt to dim the lustre of his triple crown. Nor were there wanting in his Court canonists who could give chapter and verse to support his high pretensions, and show that by divine right or immemorial custom he possessed direct temporal jurisdiction over kings and princes. Bellarmine's pages, then, which flatly denied any such power, were not likely to receive a very hearty welcome from the Pope, though he had accepted the dedication of the volume containing them, and even sent its author four hundred gold pieces in recognition of the honour.

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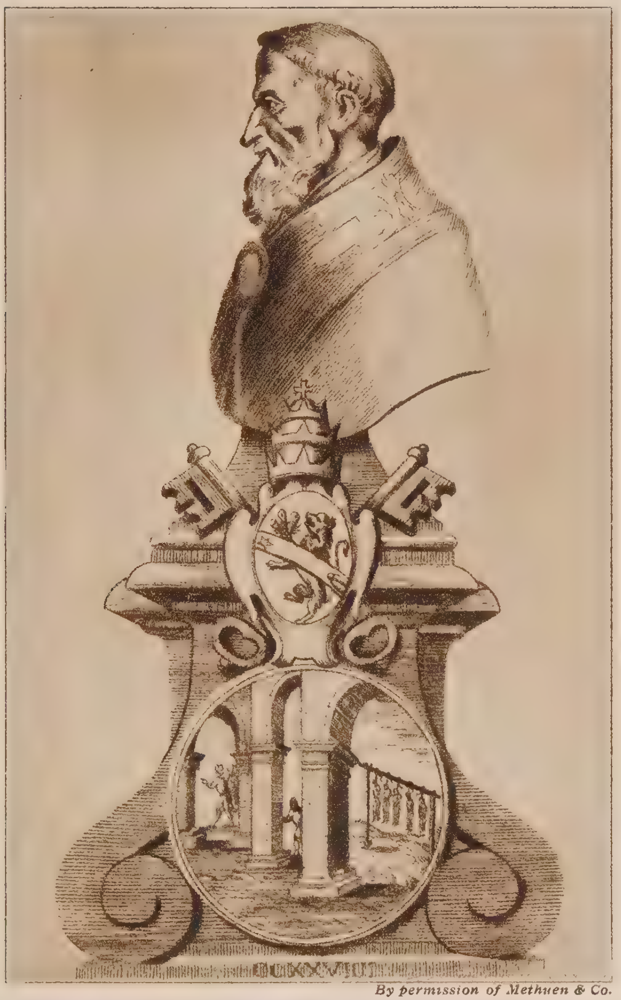
[1] *Mercure François*, t. II. Cf. De Backer, *Bibliothèque des Ecrivains*, 1ière série, 1853, p. 63.

[2] *A Relation of the State of Religion*, etc., London, 1605, p. 35.

On 19 August 1590, Count Olivares, the Spanish ambassador at Rome, wrote as follows to his master King Philip II:

> Sir, in spite of all the efforts, of which I have informed you, made by the Cardinals of the Congregation of the Index to prevent the Pope from putting Bellarmine's and Vittoria's works on that proscribed list, it has been found impossible to weaken his Holiness's resolution. Finally, as they perceived that he would no longer even listen to them, they sent him a written memorial, a copy of which I am enclosing. All, however, was to no purpose, and the Index is now in the press or has already been printed, but it is not yet possible to obtain it from the booksellers. Special efforts were made to persuade the Pope at least to point out the objectionable passages, and the corrections which were deemed necessary. These, in Vittoria, are the places where he teaches that it is lawful to resist the unjust commandments of Popes, and in Bellarmine,



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POPE SIXTUS THE FIFTH.

the chapters which limit their temporal jurisdiction. It was all in vain, and now everybody is scandalized and afraid. The Cardinals of the Congregation of the Index did not dare to tell his Holiness that the teaching of these two authors is drawn from the works of the Saints for fear he might give them a bit of his brusque temper, and perhaps put the Saints themselves on the Index.[1]

The last remark of this very interesting letter is typical of the sarcastic ambassador, whose frequent stormy interviews with Sixtus kept the Romans in merriment, but his account of Bellarmine's disgrace is perfectly accurate, for copies of the Index in question still exist and there on the back of page 52 may be read the following entry:

Roberti Bellarmini Disputationes de
Controversiis Christianae fidei
adversus hujus temporis haereticos.
Nisi prius ex superioribus
regulis recognitae fuerint.[2]

Here then we have the great champion of the Papacy repudiated by one of the most famous of the Popes, and so strange an event certainly deserves a little further investigation. Bellarmine, it will be remembered, set out for France in Cardinal Cajetan's suite during October 1589. From the day of his departure Aquaviva kept him informed of what was passing at Rome by regular monthly letters, but not until 19 February 1590 is any mention made of the trouble about the Controversies. The letter of that date runs as follows:

Your Reverence will have heard from another source about the fuss[3] that has been made in the entourage of the Holy Father over the opinion expressed in your works that the Pope is not lord of the world in temporal matters. I have spoken of it to Cardinal Santi Quattro, who is a man of sound judgment, and he thinks as we do, and I have also approached Cardinal Santa Severina. Since then, a Franciscan friar has presented the Pope with a book on this question in which he attacks your opinion, and the result

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[1] Letter from the Simancas Archives, given in the original Spanish in Couderc's *Le Vénérable Cardinal Bellarmin*, t. I, p. 132.

[2] 'The Controversies of Robert Bellarmine, until they shall have been corrected in accordance with the above rules.' This Index was printed by Paul Bladus, Rome, August 1590, and is a small quarto volume of 59 leaves, numbered on one side only. It was reproduced exactly, and published in London in 1835 by a person named Joseph Mendham, as a piece of anti-Catholic propaganda. There is a copy of the original at Simancas, and three others are in Roman archives.

[3] 'Il romore.'

> has been further excitement. The Holy Father has now put the matter in the hands of the Cardinals connected with the Index, who are all, thank God, friends of our Society. I have spoken to three of them including Cardinal Allen, and to-morrow I will speak to Cardinal Colonna, senior,[1] my words to each being that you are an obedient son and will carry out whatever is demanded of you. Do not be too anxious, then, Father. I have full confidence that, with the help of God, the affair will turn out well. All these illustrious and prudent gentlemen are on our side, and we have good hopes that once his Holiness has been convinced that your opinion is the common theological opinion on the matter he will permit it to pass. For my own part, I shall not fail to use every means in my power to help, nor shall I forget your interests in my prayers to Our Lord.[2]

A few days later (February 23) Aquaviva dispatched two letters to Bellarmine, one congratulating him on his safe arrival in Paris and the other giving the latest news about the Index trouble:

> The Cardinals have thought that it would be a good thing if one of our Fathers studied the point in question thoroughly, with a view to expounding it before the Congregation. Father Azor did this, on my instructions, but, as Cardinal Colonna, senior, told him confidentially, his work was not needed to persuade them to treat for peace with the Pope. So let your Reverence put all anxiety away. The most that could be asked of you would be the change of a few words in a new edition, as for instance where you speak of *errors*, that you should say instead *errors or opinions of certain writers*.[3]

Before Aquaviva wrote again on April 12, he had received three anxious letters from the man most concerned, and goodness knows, in spite of the General's assurances, there was reason enough for anxiety. Was the end of all his labours for the Church to be the Church's condemnation, and that too when he was far away on the Pope's perilous business and unable to defend himself? Once again the gist of the General's reply was, not to worry:

> Personally I am convinced that all will be well, but nevertheless I shall continue to do everything in my power. I have the matter deeply at heart owing to its importance, and above all, owing to my regard for your Reverence. . . . When you write to Rome, it

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[1] There were two Cardinals Colonna on the Congregation of the Index.

[2] Le Bachelet, *Bellarmin avant son Cardinalat*, pp. 259–260.

[3] Le Bachelet, *l.c.*, p. 262.

will be better not to qualify the opposite opinion as erroneous, because it has its partisans here and it would only damage your cause to offend them.[1]

Two days later another letter was posted to Paris, then undergoing its terrible siege.

> The day before yesterday [writes Aquaviva] Mgr. Cardinal Santa Severina told me that he had studied the question and had come to the same conclusion as your Reverence. To sum the matter up, it is now decided that in future editions the chapter headings should not be put in a negative but problematical form, e.g. *Utrum papa habeat*, etc., and that the opinion holding Christ to have exercised temporal jurisdiction should not be styled erroneous, as such a qualification is strongly objected to in these parts.[2]

2. From the details given in this letter we are enabled to determine not only the book and chapter but the very passage which was responsible for the Pope's annoyance.[3] Some of those who championed the direct temporal jurisdiction of the Holy See used as their main argument the following syllogism: Christ possessed direct temporal jurisdiction, not only as God but as Man, and exercised it during His life on earth; but the Pope is the vicar and the lieutenant of Christ; therefore the Pope possesses and may exercise direct temporal jurisdiction. Bellarmine's answer was to deny the second half of the major, namely that Christ had exercised the jurisdiction which, of course, He possessed. In scholastic disputations the denial of majors generally leads to trouble.

From Aquaviva's next letter, dated May 11, we learn that Father Robert had meantime drawn up a list of patristic passages which taught clearly that the royalty exercised by Christ while on earth was purely spiritual.[4] This he had dispatched to the Cardinals concerned, who were stirred by its strong testimonies to new zeal on his behalf. Owing to their efforts the Pope became neutral for a time, but about the beginning of July the opposition canonists were on the war-path again. Aquaviva, however, remained an inveterate optimist, and wrote as late as August 5 to cheer up his despondent friend with the promise of still more strenuous work for the cause. Shortly afterwards he appears to have presented an eloquently-worded memorial to the Cardinals, who in their turn addressed the following supplication to the Holy Father :

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[1] Le Bachelet, *Bellarmin avant son Cardinalat*, pp. 264–265.

[2] Le Bachelet, *l.c.*, p. 265.

[3] *De Summo Pontifice*, lib. v, cap. iv, § 2.

[4] The original of this document, entitled *De Regno Christi, quale sit*, is in the Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris. Le Bachelet reproduces it, *l.c.*, pp. 488–493.

> Having diligently examined, by your command, what Father Francis Vittoria and Father Bellarmine have written on the temporal power of the Pope, we have discovered nothing which, in our opinion, could give offence. Consequently, while remitting the whole matter to the wise judgment of your Holiness, we beg of you to take into consideration the reputation of these two good Fathers. Furthermore, even were there to be found in their books some passage less temperate or discreet than is desirable, do we not see that Holy Church has always deemed it better to tolerate the occasional blemishes of good writers than to put them to the great shame of prohibiting their works ? [1]

As has been seen in an earlier chapter, Pope Sixtus grew increasingly irritated with the legate Cajetan and his advisers during the summer of 1590. He was not in the mood, then, to listen willingly to pleas on Bellarmine's behalf, especially when they came from Aquaviva, who at this very time was resisting respectfully but firmly the Pontiff's attempts to modify the constitutions of the Society of Jesus. And in addition to all this, there was the persistent clamour of certain extremist doctors who knew how to play on the Pope's autocratic temper. Typical of such was a distinguished canonist named Francis Pegna who had been an auditor of the Rota during several Pontificates, and eventually became its Dean. Pegna remained all his life a zealous champion of the direct temporal jurisdiction of the Holy See, and when Bellarmine attacked that doctrine a second time in 1609, he addressed a letter to Pope Paul V which helps us to understand the kind of influence that was brought to bear on his predecessor Pope Sixtus :

> Most Holy Father, In the interests of truth we must needs speak out our mind plainly to the Lord and His Vicar on earth. If this little Christian [2] [Bellarmine] was possessed of solid and truly Catholic zeal, instead of itching to write a new book every week in his own defence, he would restrain himself and set about correcting those erroneous opinions which the public authority of the Church will eventually have to correct. This might certainly be expected of him, seeing that from the day he published his

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[1] Process of Bellarmine's Beatification, Rome, 1712 : *Animadversiones R.P.D. Promotoris Fidei*, num. 48.

[2] *Questo cristianello*. Perhaps we may charitably see in this diminutive a reference to Bellarmine's lack of inches rather than a suggestion of his being a ' minimizing ' theologian.

> Controversies all the heretics of the century have made use of them, and employed his arguments word for word against the Church and against the authority of the Vicar of Christ. Indeed, as long as this seminary [the Roman College] lasts the Church will have no peace, unless Christ, the all-powerful King, procures it for her by some other means in His power.[1]

The book which had thus roused Dr. Francis, was Bellarmine's answer to the Scottish regalist William Barclay.[2] By some means or other Pegna had obtained access to it while still in manuscript and the aim of his letter to Pope Paul was to prevent its publication.

> Barclay's book [he continued] is founded entirely on the doctrine of this good Father. In the very first chapter he [Barclay] resolutely denies the temporal jurisdiction of Christ, as your Holiness may see from the subjoined sheet, and from this postulate, borrowed from the good Father, there flows all that he has subsequently to say against the Power of the Pope in temporal affairs. . . . Barclay has nothing to urge against the good Father on this question because his teaching here is all that a heretic could desire. Now it remains to be seen what action ought to be taken, namely whether your Holiness should command him to refute his own erroneous chapter, or perhaps close your eyes and pretend you saw nothing. Possibly this latter plan would be best, because even though you should persuade him to revise his views, he would do the work badly and use equivocation, which would only make things worse. Then your Holiness will consider whether it be fitting that this reply to Barclay should be printed at Rome without containing a refutation of the chapter in question. Would not this be to play into the hands of the heretics, and give them an excuse for saying that Rome approved, at least by connivance or diplomatic silence, the opinion which denies the jurisdiction of Christ in temporal matters ? While leaving everything to the prudent judgment of your Holiness, I may suggest to you that it would be advisable to command Cardinal Taberna, with the greatest possible secrecy, carefully to revise this work. If your Holiness should think it well to give me to him as an assistant, the book would see the light thoroughly polished up and such as would not prejudice the truth and be more creditable to its author.[3]

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[1] Pegna carried his dislike of the Jesuits with him to the other world. In his will he left a large sum of money for the education of poor students, but added a clause expressly excluding from his charity anyone who had ever studied under the sons of St. Ignatius. Meyer, *Historiae controversiarum de divinae gratiae auxiliis*, Venice, 1742, vol. II, p. 223.

[2] See vol. II of this work, chapter xxv.

[3] *Vatican Archives*, Borghese, vol. II, 23–24, f. 139. Père Le Bachelet published a French translation of the letter in *Études*, 20 avril 1907, pp. 242–244.

With counsellors such as the eminent man who wrote this letter at his elbow, it is little wonder that Pope Sixtus let his personal prejudices have their way. Bellarmine was put on the Index, and all that Aquaviva and the Cardinals could obtain from the impetuous Pontiff was a brief respite before the condemnation was officially promulgated. That respite was enough. As has been seen from the letter of the Spanish Ambassador, the Index was ready, or almost ready, for publication on 19 August 1590. Eight days later Pope Sixtus was dead, and his successor, Urban VII, who reigned only a dozen days, had the names of Bellarmine and Vittoria immediately removed from the queer company in which they had been listed.[1]

At the present day books are condemned by special decrees, but in the past this was done and done only by their insertion in a new edition of the Index, which did not become law until it was officially published. As all authors are agreed that the Index of Sixtus the Fifth was never officially promulgated, it follows that Blessed Robert Bellarmine did not really suffer at all the judicial disgrace which his enemies had so energetically prepared for him.[2]

3. Sad to tell, this story of the Index was not the only unhappy link which connected his fortunes with those of Sixtus, and we must now turn to the very interesting but rather deplorable chapter of Church history which deals with the origins of our present edition of the Latin Vulgate. St. Jerome's great revision of the early Latin translations of the Scriptures had won its way into universal favour after a long struggle, and by the twelfth century had routed all rivals from the field. But it had been badly mauled in the fight, and Roger Bacon said that in his day it was already 'horribiliter corruptus.' When printing was invented, copies of the Vulgate, which did not then boast a capital V, multiplied at a headlong pace, and this rapid succession of new impressions accentuated the evil done by the 'sleepy copyists' against whom St. Jerome had inveighed. Then came the

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[1] Poussines, *Historiae Soc. Jesu.* Rome, 1661, pars v, lib. x, n. 33, p. 499. Aquaviva himself provides the information in a letter to Father Alber, Provincial of Upper Germany, 9 November 1590. Cf. Hilgers, *Der Index der Verbotenen Bücher*, p. 525.

[2] Not only did Bellarmine never retract his arguments against the direct power of the Pope, but in the revision of his works which was published in 1607 he brought forward new ones to their support. Cf. *Recognitio Operum*, pp. 23 sqq.

Reformation with its clamorous appeal to Holy Writ. Latin Bibles, sponsored by both Catholics and Protestants, began to pour from the press in ever increasing numbers. many of them differing in their readings and their interpretation of various dogmatic passages. In this welter of rival versions, each claiming to supersede St. Jerome and to be the best ever done, men knew not where to look for the word of God until Providence sent the Council of Trent to stay the hand of the free lances who were responsible for the confusion.

After having determined the canon of Scripture in their fourth session (1546), the Fathers went on to declare in the great disciplinary degree *Insuper*, that the Latin Vulgate must be held by all Catholics as the Church's ' authentic ' version of the Bible and be used by them in public lectures, disputations, sermons, etc. By the word authentic, i.e. officially guaranteed, the Council did not signify that the Vulgate was in every respect an absolutely accurate rendering, but that it was free from error in everything pertaining to moral and dogmatic teaching, and was substantially faithful to the original scriptures. The Fathers of the Council were so well aware of the imperfections of the editions then in circulation that in the same decree *Insuper* they had ordered a new revision to be made with the greatest possible accuracy. But, learned men though they were, they do not seem to have realized fully the enormous difficulties attendant on such a task. Some of them even light-heartedly suggested that the work might be done there and then at Trent in the intervals between the sessions, or that perhaps some encyclopedic scholar such as Cardinal Sirleto might be given the entire commission. Little did they guess when they sent their request and suggestions to the reigning Pope that neither he nor any of his ten immediate successors would live to see its fulfilment.

Though both Pius IV and Pius V began to prepare the way, nothing of importance was done until the sixteenth century had nearly run its course. Then Sixtus came like a ' consecrated whirlwind,' and there was a great stirring of peaceful, academic waters. The flagging energies of the commission for the revision of the Septuagint, which had been appointed by Gregory XIII, immediately revived under his inspiring leadership, and within a year of his election they had brought their labours to a successful end. Bellarmine was one of them, and he had also assisted Sixtus in his edition of the writings of St. Ambrose, which was finished at the same time. A document prefixed to the last volume of this work illustrates very well the authoritative and individualistic temper of the Pope. It happens to be the worst edition of St. Ambrose in existence, but for all that, he orders the patriarchs, archbishops and bishops of the universal Church, to see to it that no part of the holy Doctor's writings be ever again printed in their dioceses unless in conformity with the Roman text which had him for its editor, *contrariis non obstantibus quibuscumque.*[1]

After the Septuagint and St. Ambrose, the Vulgate. The same commission which had carried through the revision of the first work so successfully, was ordered to gird itself for the more difficult and necessary task. It included such eminent men as Cardinal Carafa, the president, Cardinal Allen, and Bellarmine, and devoted the first months to a hunt for manuscripts which was extremely fruitful. But the Codex they coveted most of all, the famous *Amiatinus*, eluded their grasp. It had been written in County Durham, probably under the direction of the Venerable Bede, but was then in a monastery on the slopes of Monte Amiata, the historic mountain that had sentinelled the childhood of Robert Bellarmine, and the good monks stubbornly refused to part with it until Sixtus intervened. His quick, sharp methods soon brought it to Rome, where it became one of the principal sources of the projected revision. The commissioners took the well-known and deservedly popular Louvain Bible of the Dominican scholar Hentenius [2] as their starting point, and wrote in between the lines of its text, or in the ample margins, the corrections they deemed advisable. Their work, to which they had brought immense erudition and the greatest possible devotion, was finished towards the close of 1588, and the revisers began to dream with pardonable pride of the immortality that must surely be the crown of their efforts.[3] But their dream was rudely shattered when they presented the much-scored volume to his Holiness. The 'temperamento focoso', which the Pontiff's excellent biographer Tempesti regretted, burst upon the head of poor Cardinal Carafa, who was ordered out of the room with harsh words.[1]

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[1] Cf. Dom H. Quentin's *Mémoire sur l'établissement du texte de la Vulgate*, Paris, 1922, p. 180. Dom Quentin is a member of the present Pontifical commission, under Cardinal Gasquet.

[2] Antwerp edition of 1583; cf. Vercellone, *Variae Lectiones*, p. lxxix.

[3] 'This glorious work, now nearly ended, will bring the Catholic Church into shining credit and crown her supreme Pastor with an eternal aureole.' Letter of Agelli, one of the revisers, to Cardinal Carafa, quoted by Père F. Prat, *Études*, août, 1890, p. 582.

Want of scholarship in the revisers' work was certainly not the cause of the Pope's anger, as a distinguished member of the present Vulgate commission assures us that if the emendations of Carafa's men had been accepted Cardinal Gasquet's helpers would have infinitely less work to do to-day.[2] It was the drastic nature of the changes that troubled the zealous and prudent Sixtus, and troubled him for the very good reason that he was responsible for the welfare of the entire Church. Most of his children knew very little and cared less about the obligations of scholarship. Their traditional 'mumpsimus' would be dearer to them than any learned man's 'sumpsimus', so they might very well be troubled and scandalized by the eight to ten thousand sumpsimuses which Cardinal Carafa wanted them to take to their hearts. Moreover, the variant readings were presented to the Pope high and dry, without any critical apparatus to show their value. Where, for instance, the Louvain Bible had *accepit uxorem*, the revisers wrote in *accepta uxore*. The sense was the same, but Sixtus had no means of discovering that the second reading was the one borne out by the manuscripts, unless, indeed, he were to put eight or ten thousand questions to Carafa, which was the last thing in the world that could be expected of him. The result was that he decided there and then to cashier his commission and take the work into his own hands.

4. In the famous bull 'Aeternus Ille', which he drafted some time later to introduce the revised Vulgate to the Christian world, Sixtus said :

> We, weighing the importance of the matter, and considering carefully the great and singular privilege we hold of God, and our true and legitimate succession from Blessed Peter, Prince of the Apostles, . . . are the proper and specially constituted Person to decide this whole question.

The mammoth sentence which contains these lines runs on for three hundred words.[3] Its writer set to work on the task to which he felt his duty called him, with characteristic energy, and spent hours each day poring over the black-letter pages of earlier Vulgate editors. As he suffered from insomnia, these labours were carried on far into the night. Only two assistants were admitted to his counsels, one of whom, Angelo Rocca, he nearly worked to death. Poor Angelo, sick in body and soul, had to copy out the entire Bible in his own hand, and breaking down under the strain, he all but died a martyr to the cause.[1] The other assistant was Bellarmine's old master, Father Toledo, who had not yet earned the distinction of being the first Jesuit to wear a Cardinal's hat. To him Sixtus submitted each sheet of his work as soon as it was completed, but we are told that he accepted his opinions only when they happened to coincide with his own.[2] These opinions were extremely conservative, for though the Pope followed his discredited commissioners in his choice of the Louvain Bible as a foundation text, unlike them, he clung to its readings as much as he possibly could, and whatever his sins against scholarship, venturesomeness was not among them. The commission had suggested a series of excellent emendations in the last ten chapters of the Book of Genesis, all of which were rejected. Sixtus made, indeed, forty-three changes, but thirty-one of these were merely orthographical. And it was the same way all through the Old Testament. The Louvain Bible more than held its own, and when he turned away from it, as he did only rarely and in matters of little consequence, it was rather to make the sense clear than out of any respect for ancient manuscripts.

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[1] Cardinal Santori's Diary, 17 November 1588.

[2] Dom Quentin, *Mémoire*, etc., p. 180.

[3] The complete text of the bull is given in Cornely's *Introductio in U.T. Libros Sacros*, 1885, vol. 1, pp. 465–474.

But there was one point, not a critical point, on which Sixtus showed himself decidedly radical. Robert Stephanus had introduced our present system of verses into his Bible of 1555. The Louvain editors adopted it, and in a short time, owing to its convenience for purpose of reference, it became a settled habit of all Christendom. The Pope now discarded it in favour of a new scheme worked out by himself. It is true that his divisions were more logical than the old ones, and in this they marked progress, but the men of the sixteenth century did not look on the matter in that light. They thought rather of the confusion and worry and waste of time which the change would involve. Preachers and their congregations would be at cross-purposes, and it would be impossible to consult a pre-Sixtine theological book without uncharitable thoughts about the innovator. Learned men, generally, felt that there were more precious things in life than logic, and a uniform system of reference was one of them. Another editorial sin of the Pope's, this time one of omission, was the exclusion of the traditional prefaces to the various books of the Bible. He changed the titles of the Psalms, too, and as some people considered that the titles were inspired, this act provided them with a further grievance.

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[1] F. Prat, *Études*, t. LI, pp. 38–39; E. Nestlé, *Ein Jubiläum d. latein. Bibel*, Tubingen, 1892, p. 14.

[2] Sixtus himself says as much in the Bull *Aeternus Ille.*

After about eighteen months of Herculean labour, Sixtus had his Bible ready for the printers, who were none other than the famous firm of Aldus Manutius. At the beginning of 1590, the first copies of the aristocratic folio were brought to the Pope, but his joy at their fine looks was changed to annoyance when he discovered that there were several misprints in the text. With characteristic energy he immediately began to think of some way to remedy the evil, and not liking tables of *errata*, decided to do the corrections with his pen or by means of little square, oblong, or triangular pieces of paper, pasted over the blunders. It was heavy, tedious work, and it took him a full six months to complete, but even then he was not satisfied. The Spanish Ambassador relates that no sooner had he been given a copy of the corrected Bible for presentation to his royal master than a monk named Boccapaduli arrived in hot haste, demanding it back for further retouches. It would seem to be plain enough from these and other indications that the august editor was in two minds about his work. Furthermore, in a few places phrases and whole verses had been accidentally omitted, and no little square, oblong, or triangular devices could restore them. Consequently, publication of the long-expected volume was deferred from day to day and month to month, though the Bull which was to introduce it to the Christian world had been drafted, printed, and made ready for posting upon the doors of St. Peter's and the Lateran Basilica, much earlier.[1] In it Sixtus said:

> By the fullness of Apostolical power, we decree and declare that this edition . . . , approved by the authority delivered to us by the Lord, is to be received, and held as true, lawful, authentic, and unquestioned in all public and private[2] discussion, reading, preaching, and explanation.

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[1] This posting of a bull was the usual method of official promulgation.

[2] The adjective 'private' is an addition to the ruling of the Council of Trent.

No future edition was to be published without the express permission of the Holy See; nor was anyone to print a private or independent edition; nor was the Sixtine edition to be reprinted during the next ten years in any other place than the Vatican; nor, when that time had expired, might editions be printed elsewhere which did not coincide down to the last letter with the Sixtine. Any printer, editor, or bookseller who should dare to contravene these orders would suffer, in addition to temporal punishment, the penalty of major excommunication, from which they could not be relieved, except when dying, save by the Pope himself. These were very strong words, and it is not surprising that they made anxious, at a later date, men who were whole-heartedly devoted to the best interests of the Holy See.

The bull was dated '1 March, 1589, the fifth year of our Pontificate,' but this means, according to our usual reckoning, 1 March 1590. The ecclesiastical year began on March 25, in the time of Pope Sixtus, and as he was elected on 24 April 1585, March the 1st in the fifth year of his pontificate must have fallen in the year 1590. But though the Bull was signed and everything seemed ready, no Vulgate appeared. The learned world was on the tip-toe of expectation. Everything conspired to whet men's curiosity, the mystery surrounding the Pope's editorial work, his well-known 'temperamento focoso,' the inexplicable delays, and the spicy rumours which, as is usual in such circumstances, had soon begun to go their mischievous rounds. At long last, in the middle of April 1590, the news-sheets of Rome announced that copies of the Bible had been presented to the cardinals and ambassadors. What happened next, nobody knows. Silence resumes its reign until, on August 27, the Romans heard with amazement above the familiar notes of the Ave Maria bells, a startling, ominous sound—the solemn tolling from the Capitol which signified that Sixtus the Fifth was dead. Then began an immediate and violent reaction on the part of the fickle mob who, forgetting all that their noble and large-hearted sovereign had done for them, remembered him only as the stern judge of their vices. All night long Rome was given over to wild tumult, and the poor, worn-out corpse of the Pope barely escaped desecration under cover of a terrible storm that had broken upon the ungrateful city. More cruel even than the blind fury of the masses was the cold, calculated hatred with which the Pope's enemies in high places pursued his memory. The insolent

Olivares continued to send his hectoring dispatches to Spain in angry denunciation of the new Bible,[1] and there were even some respectable but aggrieved members of Carafa's commission who did not disdain to join in the cabal. Robert Bellarmine was not one of them. He had suffered more than most men from the arbitrary temper of Sixtus, but so little was he inclined to counsels of revenge that he adopted, on the contrary, a line of action which was to bring upon him the heavy charge of having lied brazenly to shield the reputation of the dead Pontiff.

5. When, on 11 November 1590, he re-entered Rome after his adventures and sufferings in France, the Sixtine Vulgate was still the topic of the hour. Gregory XIV, who succeeded the short-lived Urban VII at the beginning of December, knew not what course to take in the clamour of conflicting opinions. Bellarmine himself tells how the Pope found a way out of his embarrassment:

> During the year 1591, when Gregory XIV was debating what he should do about the Bible of Sixtus the Fifth, in which very many regrettable changes had been made, some men, whose opinions had great weight, held that it should be publicly prohibited. I did not think so, and I showed the Holy Father that, instead of forbidding the edition of the Bible in question, it would be better to correct it in such a manner that it could be published without detriment to the honour of Pope Sixtus. This result could be achieved by removing inadvisable changes as quickly as possible, and then issuing the volume with Sixtus's own name upon it, and a preface stating that owing to haste some errors had crept into the first edition through the fault of printers or other persons.[2]

These words of Blessed Robert were to gain almost as much notoriety as the bold statement of Jacob to his father Isaac, and very few advocates would urge on the Jesuit's behalf, as St. Augustine had done for the Patriarch, that what he said was not a lie but a mystery.

Pope Gregory immediately acted on Bellarmine's suggestion, and set up a new commission with the elder Cardinal Colonna at its head. Work was begun on 7 February 1591, but the theological consultors who numbered a dozen, and the Cardinals who numbered half a dozen, talked and argued so much that at the end of six weeks they had examined only the Book of Genesis. Bellarmine had feared that there might be some such deadlock, and in hopes of preventing it had drawn up an admirable little memorandum for the guidance of the commissioners. If they did not want their work to straggle on fruitlessly, he said, they must try to come to an agreement about the details of procedure. For instance, supposing that in a particular passage the Vulgate version had for it the witness of the Septuagint, but against it the Hebrew and Chaldean texts, was it the Greek or the Hebrew that was to prevail? After such preliminary matters had been discussed, it would be possible to formulate definite rules which might then be submitted to the judgment of learned men in the various Catholic universities, to the cardinals, and to other competent persons. A majority vote would decide which of the rules were to be followed, and with these as a guide the whole work of revision could be safely committed to a few men thoroughly grounded in the three languages, thus ensuring what was most necessary under the circumstances, namely expedition.[1]

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[1] Père Le Bachelet has published ten of these in their original Spanish. *Bellarmin et la Bible*, etc., pp. 189–198.

[2] *Autobiography*, n. xxix: 'Quod fieret, si quam celerrime tollerentur quae male mutata erant, et biblia recuderentur sub nomine ejusdem Sixti, et addita praefatione, qua significaretur, in prima editione Sixti, prae festinatione irrepsisse aliqua errata vel typographorum vel aliorum.'

Towards the end of March 1591, the unwieldy commission began to take these wise counsels to heart, and eventually, by a kind of self-denying ordinance, it valiantly cut itself in two, five of the Cardinals retiring with four of the consultors.[2] Cardinal Colonna, the president, then invited the survivors, among whom were Cardinal Allen and Bellarmine, to his charming country-house at Zagarolo, on the slopes of the Sabine hills, eighteen miles from the noise and distractions of Rome. In this pleasant spot they were treated royally by their host, and set to work with such a will that the revision was finished by the middle of June. In fact, it appears to have taken them altogether less than three weeks.[3] Bellarmine's keen interest, and important part in the great work may be guessed at from the careful table of 'regrettable changes' in the Sixtine Bible which he drew up for the assistance of all concerned. The table has two columns, the left containing the texts that had been omitted, added to, or modified, and the right, his censure based on the Hebrew, Chaldaic, Greek, and Latin manuscripts.[1]

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[1] *De ratione servanda in bibliis corrigendis*; published by Le Bachelet in *Bellarmin et la Bible Sixto-Clémentine*, pp. 126–129.

[2] Vercellone, *Variae Lectiones*, Rome, 1860, pp. xlix–li.

[3] Vercellone, *l.c.*, p. lxxiv, where a letter of a consultor named Pierre Morin is cited. Bellarmine was back in Rome during the third week of June, as he assisted at the death-bed of St. Aloysius, who went to Heaven on the 20th.

Some time after Blessed Robert's death, a tablet was erected in the villa at Zagarolo to commemorate the editorial record of the revisers:

BIBLIA SACRA
A MENDIS
QUAE IN EDITIONE A SIXTO V. IMPERATA
IRREPSERANT
MARC. ANTONIUS COLUMNA ET GULIELMUS ALANUS
CARDINALES
UNA CUM VENER. ROBERTO BELLARMINO
SOC. JESU POSTEA CARDINALI
ALIISQ. DOCTISSIMIS VIRIS
UNDEVIGINTI DIERUM SPATIO
MIRO JUXTA PERTINACIQ. LABORE
IN HIS AEDIBUS
VINDICARUNT
M.D. XC. I.[2]

The work of revision being over at last, the next practical question was whether it should be made public at once, and if so under what conditions. Bellarmine was again asked for advice, and gave it to the Pope with his usual clarity and frankness. Point number one, the new Vulgate ought to be published immediately as this was the only way to safeguard the honour of the Holy See, and the interests of the Church. The edition of Sixtus was certain to fall into the hands of heretics, and it was greatly to be feared that one or other of them would use it to prove that the Scriptures had been corrupted by a Pope, an argument which he could render plausible by citing many passages that had been omitted, amplified, or changed without rhyme or reason, and against the witness of all codices, Latin, Greek, and Hebrew.[3] The best way to forestall such a manœuvre would be to publish the Zagarolo recension as soon as possible, with a preface saying that Pope Sixtus had published a Bible revised by his orders, the previous year, but on examining it had discovered that many errors had crept into the text owing to excessive haste and other causes, as usually happens in first editions ; consequently, that he had decided to have the work done all over again, but death intervening, it fell to his successor to carry out his wishes, which were now realized in the edition before the reader. By proceeding thus, the Holy See would escape the dilemma of seeming either to condemn the acts of Pope Sixtus or to approve the errors which were to be found in his work.

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[1] Le Bachelet, *Bellarmin et la Bible Sixto-Clémentine*, pp. 130–134.

[2] Le Bachelet, *l.c.*, p. 135. Cornely is somewhat incredulous about the nineteen days! *Introductio*, I, p. 477.

[3] This is exactly what happened, as will be seen presently.

Second point, it would be better to publish the new Bible under the names of both Sixtus and Gregory, but without any decree giving preference to this over all other editions, or still less, suppressing all others in its favour. Bellarmine brings to the support of this suggestion, which is obviously aimed at the too authoritative Bull *Aeternus Ille*, an array of excellent arguments that do credit to both his heart and judgment.

> We [he says] who laboured at the revision of the Bible know well that our work does not deserve such high approbation, for though the Pope had given us our commission he could not give us the assistance of the Holy Spirit, which is his own exclusive prerogative. Nor are we conscious only that being human we may easily have made mistakes. We know, too, that we were in a great hurry, that we often disagreed, and, above all, that we had to leave many things alone which needed amending because we did not possess the necessary Latin codices or because we did not want to trouble the souls of simple men by too many novelties, or finally because we were anxious not to give the impression that we considered ourselves better scholars than our fathers, who preferred to tolerate such things rather than change them. . . . In addition to all this, the publication of the decree we have in mind, would be a great injustice to the pious labours of the Paris and Louvain doctors, who worked so hard to achieve a correct and well-appointed Vulgate. . . .

Bellarmine's third and last point was an eloquent, and effective plea for the retention of variant readings in the margins of the new Bible. St. Jerome and St. Augustine were both strongly in favour of them, he urges. They are a great help to the understanding of the chosen text, and would afford a second line of defence, if the heretical attack pressed too hardly upon it. Besides this, they would form a sort of library in which everybody could consult the most ancient and rarest of manuscripts.[1] It was an earnest and excellent little memorandum, and its fortunes were as follows. The advice given in the first point prevailed, that given in the last, about the variant readings, was not accepted much to its offerer's disappointment,[1] while about the second there was to be a great deal of lively controversy, which ended, apparently, in a reasonable compromise. In the whole affair, we see that Bellarmine was as ever the advocate of moderation and charity, and though he did not win a place for his beloved variant readings, no one at the present day will think the less of him because he tried so hard to secure their admission.[2]

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[1] Le Bachelet, *Bellarmin et la Bible Sixto-Clémentine*, Document VI, pp. 137–141.

6. The closing decade of the sixteenth century was a time of great mortality among Popes. Urban VII had his coronation and funeral in the same month. Gregory XIV followed him to the grave after a bare nine months on the throne, and within a third of that time his successor, Innocent IX, was also gone. In January 1592 Clement VIII was elected, and to him, at long last, fell the honour of crowning the hopes of half a century. But he was a man, sturdily independent in judgment, and refused to be hurried by anybody. Still another committee was appointed, consisting of two Cardinals and the Jesuit, Father Toledo, from whose decisions there was to be no further appeal. The Cardinals were wise men and knowing the character of their colleague left him all the responsibility. This prodigious worker had his report ready in record time, a little masterpiece of patient, balanced erudition, and then it was the printers' turn to show their mettle. They did so, and left as witnesses of their exploit a far larger number of misprints than had disfigured the work of Pope Sixtus.[3] The great thing, however, was that they had the Bible ready before the end of 1592. It appeared under the name of Sixtus alone, and this was, in many ways, only fair and fitting, for without his vigorous initiative and tireless encouragement the Church would very probably not have had her revised Vulgate until many a year later.[4]

The most difficult and delicate task that had confronted Pope Clement was the provision of a suitable preface for the new Bible. In the Roman *Bibliotheca Angelica*, which derives its name from the heroic secretary of the various Vulgate commissions, Angelo Rocca, there is an interesting manuscript fragment that may well have been intended for this purpose. It was probably written by Angelo himself, and explained among other things, that Sixtus had at first printed his Bible as it were privately, with the intention of submitting it before publication to the criticism of learned men throughout the world. These criticisms, as well as the Pope's own discovery of various misprints and blunders, caused him to think seriously of starting the work anew, but death came before he could accomplish his design. Some mischievous Monsignor who had lighted on Angelo's manuscript annotated it with a verse from the prophet Habacuc (ch. i, v. 5): 'Behold ye among the nations and see: wonder and be astonished; for a work is done in your days which no man will believe when it shall be told.'[1] Pope Clement very properly rejected this pleasant invention as a way out of his difficulty, and turned, as his predecessors had done, to the experience and prudent judgment of Bellarmine. The preface which is still to be read at the beginning of our Latin Vulgate is by him, and will be examined presently.

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[1] This he expressed in a letter of 3 December 1603 to the great Louvain Scripture scholar Francis Lucas. Le Bachelet, *Bellarmin et la Bible Sixto-Clémentine*, pp. 168–169.

[2] It is almost certain that they will be restored in the next edition of the Vulgate.

[3] Vercellone, *Variae Lectiones*, p. xlviii.

[4] This is the edition of the Vulgate which the Church uses at the present day, but though we know it now as the Clementine Vulgate, the name of Pope Clement does not seem to have appeared on it until nearly half a century after its first issue (Paris, 1641). Cf. Vercellone, *l.c.*, p. lxxii.

The Bible of Pope Clement was out at last, but what was to be done about those copies of the Bible of Pope Sixtus that had escaped from Rome? Bellarmine, as has been seen, feared that the enemies of the Church might use them as powder and shot, so in February 1592 he wrote recommending Clement to buy back as many as possible of the fugitives. Acting on this suggestion, the Pope ordered Cardinal Santa Severina to convey his instructions to the Inquisitor at Venice and to the General of the Jesuits. The Aldine firm had probably sent a big consignment of the Bibles to their Venetian house and these the Inquisitor was to capture, while Father Aquaviva was to concentrate on Germany and other likely transalpine places of refuge.[2] The very next day after Santa Severina's audience, Father James Sirmond sent the following note from Rome to a friend in France:

> During the present week, his Holiness commissioned our Father General to buy back the Bibles of Sixtus the Fifth in every place

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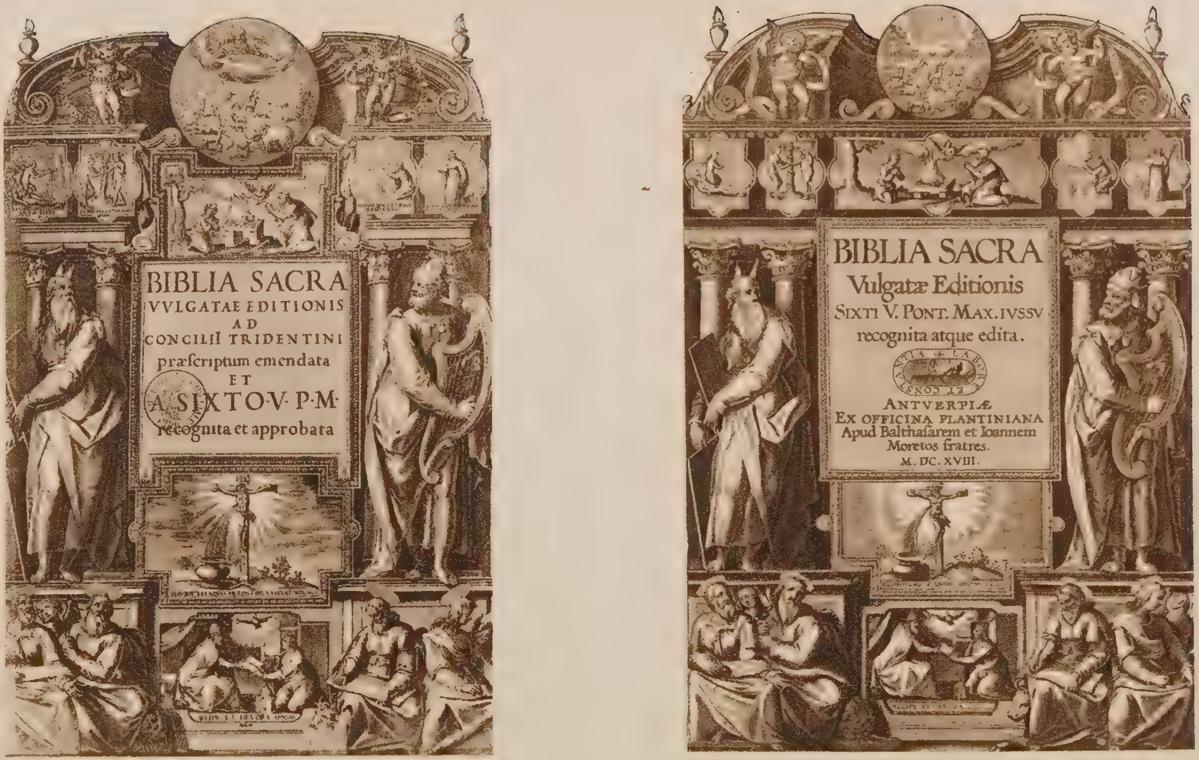
[1] Cf. Amann, *Die Vulgata Sixtina*, Freiburg, 1912, p. 122, n. 2.

[2] *Journal of the Audiences of Cardinal Santa Severina*, fragment from the Vatican Archives, published by Le Bachelet, *Bellarmine et la Bible*, etc., pp. 150–151.



BIBLIA SACRA
VVLGATAE EDITIONIS
AD
CONCILII TRIDENTINI
præſcriptum emendata
ET
A SIXTO·V· P·M·
recognita et approbata

BIBLIA SACRA
Vulgatæ Editionis
SIXTI V. PONT. MAX. IVSSV
recognita atque edita.
ANTVERPIÆ
EX OFFICINA PLANTINIANA
Apud Balthaſarem et Ioannem
Moretos fratres.
M. DC. XVIII.

THE 'COUNTERFEIT PRESENTMENT' OF TWO BIBLES.

Title-page of the Sixtine Vulgate of 1590 *from the copy in the Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris, together with title-page of a reprint of the Clementine Vulgate of* 1592.

where he could possibly do so, his desire being to suppress or correct them. Accordingly Father General has written about the matter to all provinces beyond the Alps.[1]

Throughout the next two years the Jesuits continued to search for copies of the magnificent but mischief-making folio. Its beautiful print and sumptuous binding would have endeared it to its possessors, quite apart from its value as an anti-papal weapon, so the Fathers of the Society had a difficult task to perform. The price to be paid would be correspondingly heavy, and we find that some thrifty ministers and procurators were anxious on this score. Clement VIII reassured them through the General. The Papal exchequer would stand all the damages, he said.[2]

7. It is impossible to decide exactly the amount of success which attended the Jesuits' efforts, but it does not seem to have been very great. Though we are given definite news of only three copies, there are various indications which justify us in believing that at least ten were recovered. Among the many which escaped, one made its way to England and fell into the hands of Bodley's first librarian, the rabidly anti-Catholic Dr. Thomas James. Dr. Thomas was a learned man in his own fashion, and specialized in showing up the ignorance and bad-faith of Roman controversialists. In 1611, he published a book in English entitled : *A Treatise of the corruption of Scripture, Councils, and Fathers, by the Prelates, Pastors and Pillars of the Church of Rome, for maintenance of Popery and irreligion.* The interest of the following extract from this rare work may atone for its length :

> In the yeere of our Lord, 1600, it pleased God to move me to the setting forth of my observations on the two Vulgar Bibles, published at Rome by Sixtus Quintus and Clement the eight. The occasion, that first drew me to undergoe so troublesome and toilesome a work, was this ; A yeere or two before the printing theerof (and not many years after Cales voiage) it so fell out by God's providence, that I met with the Bible of Sixtus in a Stationers shop : and having read the Praeface, and viewed it well, considering the singular care that was taken in the mending of it. . . . I made haste home to fetch a Bible of Hentens [3] which it was my chance to buy of a souldier, that was at the sacking of Cales, whose bootie was bookes. Having brought it to the booksellers shop,

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[1] Prat, *Récherches historiques*, Lyons, 1878, t. v, pp. 10–11.

[2] Le Bachelet, *Bellarmin et la Bible Sixto-Clémentine*, Documents, pp. 150, 151.

[3] I.e. the Louvain Bible of Hentenius.

I began to compare it with that of Sixtus, to see whether this Bible[1] which came out of the Colledge of Jesuits at Cadiz, were thus corrected, as was commanded in a most straight manner under the greatest paine that can bee laid upon a Christian Soul. I had scarcely gone over three verses of the first chapter of Genesis, but I found that the Jesuits had learned of their Chiefe Jesuite Cardinall Bellarmine, not to esteeme of any Bible, more than shall serve their turne, nor of any excommunication that shall crosse their purposes. This Bible, though it did reasonably well agree with that of Sixtus in some places, yet did differ in others: and for the verses, throughout all the books of Holy Scriptures, he had so divided the chapters that no one verse agreed with the verses of my Henten Bible. What reason his Holiness had to change them, I cannot learne nor ghesse at: [2] but espying this difference, I inquired further of the stationer whether there were any later Bible extant to be bought. He told mee there was and directed mee where it was to bee seene. I delayed no time, till I had gotten that into my hands also. And it fell out to bee the Bible of Clement, the eight.

I was verie glad that I had met with this Bible because my mind ever gave mee that Sixtus 5 was too confident and earnest in the defence of his Bibles. My conjecture happened to bee truer than I was aware: for I found, by a diligent comparing of both Bibles, that the two Popes did notoriously differ amongst themselves, not onelie in the number of the verses[3] but in the bodie of the Text and in the Praefaces and Bulls themselves. I should hardly have beleeved so much, unless I had seene it with mine eyes: but *quod vidimus testamur*. Hereupon, I thought good to fall presently to a serious and due examination and collation of both Bibles: I gathered my collections into a small booke and presented them unto the Archbishop [Whitgift] then living, now of blessed memorie, by whose authoritie, and intreatie of friends, the Booke was printed at London, with this title in Latin; *Bellum Papale, sive Concordia discors Sixti* 5, *et Clem.* 8 *circa Hieronymianam Editionem*. In English thus: 'The warres of the Popes among themselves or A disagreeing agreement of Sixtus 5, and Clement the 8, about the Hierome Bibles.' This booke of warres, or jarres rather, of their two Popes, was mentioned the same yeere, in the Catalogue of the Mart bookes. Every yeere after, I beganne to harken after some Pamphlet or other in answere of it: but I see it is not so easie a matter to reconcile the two Popes, and to

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[1] Henten's.

[2] This is a pretty example of the Oxford Doctor's methods. He first blames the Jesuits because the Henten Bible, with which they had nothing to do, is not in accord with the Bible of Pope Sixtus which appeared many years after it, and then he blames Pope Sixtus because his Bible is not in accord with Henten's!

[3] Clement VIII had restored the system of Stephanus.

> answer the open contradictions or to salve the infinite repugnancies that are in it. But after long expectation, in the end steps foorth James Gretser, the Jesuite, Cardinal Bellarmine's greatest advocate. The first quarrell that he picks to my booke is to the title-page; he saith I have given it an horrible title. The Jesuit speakes truer than he is aware: the title is as the booke, an horrible title and a terrible booke unto the Papists. In this war their Head hath bin so foiled and their Church so deadly wounded that all the balme in Gilead will not cure them. We have heer one Pope against another, Sixtus against Clement, Clement against Sixtus, disputing, writing and fighting about the Hierome Bible.[1]

James announces in the dedication of his book that his chief aim is 'to prove by the event that Rome is Babylon and the Pope Antichrist.' Anyone who has eyes to see, he says, shall plainly discover the abomination of desolation sitting in the holy place:

> He shall observe infinite varieties, contrarieties, contradictions and oppositions, between two Bibles, set forth by two Popes within two yeeres. You shall see the Popes breathe hot and cold, say and unsay the same thing twice, and in fine they have now truly verified the Bible to be a nose of wax, plied and wrought into any fashion, for their advantage. A shame it is that any Christian should presume to adde or take away ought from the Word of God, against the expresse commandment of God: yet, O intolerable impietie! not any simple Christian or layman but the Bishop of Rome, chiefe Pastor of the Church, sole judge of all Controversies, whose lippes should preserve knowledge and his tongue speake no deceit, hath audaciously presumed to adde and take away whole sentences; to change the words of holy writ into a cleane contrarie meaning, to make, as it were, white black and black white. But I shall be bold to let this counterfeit Bishop know from the true Bishop of our soules Christ Jesus, that 'because hee hath added unto these Bookes, God shall adde unto him the plagues that are written in this Booke: and because hee hath diminished of the words of these Bookes, God shall take away his part out of the Booke of Life and out of the Holy Cittie' (Apoc. xxii, 18).

Words such as these were certainly calculated to raise Protestant expectations, but the mountain's portentous labouring brought forth only the usual progeny of labouring mountains. In the book with which we are dealing Dr. James gives the cream of his former labours as set forth in the *Bellum Papale*. A very brief glance at his anthology will not be without interest. His charge was, we remember, that the Popes changed and corrupted the Bible 'for their own advantage,' meaning presumably some doctrinal advantage over the Protestants. In support of it he first brings forward nine 'sentences or words added by Pope Clement which were not in Pope Sixtus Bible.' Of these we may quote two specimens, typical of the rest, italicizing the words omitted by Sixtus :

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[1] *A Treatise*, etc., Part III, pp. 27–31.

> II Paralipomenon, ii. 10 : And I will give thy servants the workmen that are to cut down the trees, for their food, twenty thousand cores of wheat, and as many cores of barley, *and twenty thousand measures of wine.*
>
> Matthew, xxvii, 35 : And after they had crucified him they divided his garments, casting lots ; *that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet saying : They divided my garments among them ; and upon my vesture they cast lots.*

In both texts it is very difficult to see what possible doctrinal advantage Pope Sixtus could have expected to gain by his omissions. The absence of the passages is almost certainly to be explained in one of two ways, either they were not in the Louvain Bible which Sixtus followed closely, or else their omission was purely an accident of printing. Neither explanation gives the least support to Dr. James's theory.[1]

The next section of the anthology contains twelve 'sentences or words left out by Clement, that were in Sixtus Bibles' and here, by the canons of textual criticism, it has to be admitted that Clement was right and Sixtus generally wrong. Not a single one of the passages, however, could have given any advantage to the Church in her struggle with heresy, as they had nothing whatever to do with faith or morals. The two over which James raises the biggest lamentation run as follows : 'And David said, I shall go and bring the Ark with blessing into my house' (II Kings, vi, 12) ; 'And they caught me and they cried and said, take away our enemy' (Acts, xxiv, 18, 19). Then, in the anthology, comes a series of forty-four 'Flat contradictions and errors in numbers and directions in the two Bibles,' Clement e.g., saying *from the south* where Sixtus had said *to the south*, and so on. With the exception of a solitary passage, dogma is in no way involved unless somebody cares to spy the thin end of an argument against Communion under both species in Pope Clement's substitution of one bottle of wine for the two bottles of Pope Sixtus (II Kings, xvi, 1).

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[1] The author has by him a reprint of the Antwerp Bible of 1583 used by Pope Sixtus. It was issued in 1587 in the same place, and by the same firm (Plantinus) that had published the 1583 edition. An examination of this volume brings the following interesting facts to light : (1) The passage from II Paralipomenon omitted by Pope Sixtus is not in the text but in the margin of the Antwerp Bible ; (2) the passage omitted from St. Matthew is in the Antwerp text but there is a technical sign, an *obelus* or *veru* opposite it, indicating that it was not to be found in 15 MSS. ; (3) the words omitted from II Kings are also in the Antwerp text but there is the same sign to say that they are absent from 10 MSS. ; (4) the passage omitted from Acts xxiv. is not in the text but in the margin of the Antwerp Bible. For the sake of anyone who may care to look them up, we give the other seven references of Dr. James : Num. xxx, 11 ; Prov. xxv. 14 ; Lev. xx, 9 ; Judges xvii, 2, 3 ; 1 Kings iv, 21 ; 3 Kings xii, 10 ; Esther xv, 1. In many of these passages only a few words are omitted.

The solitary, exceptional passage is an interesting one from the Book of Deuteronomy (c. xvii) where Moses prescribes that in cases of controversy about the law the people must have recourse 'to the priests of the Levitical race and to the judge that shall be at that time,' and abide by their decision. Then continuing, he says according to the Clementine reading, which is undoubtedly the right one: 'But he that will be proud, and refuse to obey the commandment of the Priest . . . *and* the decree of the judge: that man shall die.' Now Sixtus, in his edition, followed the Louvain text which ran: '*by* the decree of the judge that man shall die.' The difference in meaning is considerable, yet it all turned on the substitution of one letter for another —'et' instead of 'ex.'[1] Bellarmine had made use of this text to prove that the Pope was the final judge in moral and dogmatic controversies,[2] and had naturally cited the Louvain reading which was the accepted one at the time when he wrote. In the revision of his works, which he made public in 1607, this passage remained, either through an oversight, or for some less justifiable reason. Consequently, Dr. James had him at his mercy here, and made, as he was entitled to do, the fullest possible use of his advantage.

> Bellarmine and others [he says] do make great store of this place, to prove the Pope's super-royall power, and sole judgment in Controversies of Religion: but if Bellarmine, or any Papist whatsoever, doe thinke to make any benefit of this place, he is not onely

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[1] *Sixtus*: 'Qui autem superbierit, nolens obedire sacerdotis imperio, qui eo tempore ministrat Domino Deo tuo, ex decreto judicis morietur homo ille.' This is the reading of the Antwerp Bible of 1583 and 1587. *Clement*: 'Qui autem superbierit, nolens obedire sacerdotis imperio, qui eo tempore ministrat Domino Deo tuo, et decreto judicis, morietur homo ille.' On the passage, see Cornelius à Lapide's note, *Commentarii*, ed. Paris, 1860, t. 1, p. 1016.

[2] *De Summo Pontifice*, lib. IV, cap. i.

> deceived, but accursed also, by the Bull of Clemens Octavus. But as a learned Papist told a friend of mine, upon the like occasion, the Bulls of Popes are always *tremendae*, but not *tenendae*. For Bellarmine although hee be commanded upon paine of the greater curse, to reforme his quotations, according to the late corrected Vulgar: yet he will not change his former reading though it were never so corrupt; because on it is built a maine point of Poperie which would soone come to nothing, if that vicious reading were taken away. I wonder that the Cardinall doth refuse to obey his spirituall Pastor heere upon earth at whose feet he is wont to prostrate both himselfe and his writings.[1]

This is the Doctor's biggest hit in all his book and nobody will deny that it is a good one, though somewhat spoiled by exaggeration.[2]

8. Turning now to the Preface of Bellarmine, 'that flower of the Jesuits,' as James styles him, it will be well to give its most famous clauses side by side with those of two other related documents from the same pen. For the convenience of the reader they are printed together on the opposite page.

Anyone who studies those three passages with a little care will make some interesting discoveries, which we may classify under three heads. First, in the Preface, Sixtus is represented as preparing his Bible for publication, whereas in the Memorandum and Autobiography the work is spoken of as having already seen the light. Secondly, the errors attributed to the Sixtine Bible are described in the Preface as simple misprints, whereas in the other two documents they are supposed to have come about through various causes and through the negligence of printers or others. Thirdly, in the Memorandum and Preface Sixtus is credited with the intention of completely revising his work, whereas in the Autobiography there is not a syllable to suggest this. *Tableau!* Down three centuries we can hear the clamour and scorn. Catholics have been as zealous as Protestants in the attack, and not until Bellarmine's beatification in 1923 did they desist. The gentler souls among them called the story in the Preface 'a pious subterfuge,' but the others, including some eminent *advocati diaboli* and distinguished twentieth-century doctors, have not hesitated to brand it as an elaborate and calculated lie.

As a good illustration of Protestant methods in their more

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[1] *A Treatise*, etc., Part III, pp. 18–19.

[2] Bellarmine's main reasoning is quite independent of this unfortunate text. Why he did not discard it altogether, after the Clementine revision, is a mystery.

MEMORANDUM TO GREGORY XIV, 1591.

(*Vide supra* p. 283.)

. . . We hope that this evil [Protestant misuse of the Sixtine Bible] will be avoided if the new edition, made recently by order of the Holy Father, be printed, and a preface added relating that though Pope Sixtus had *issued* a Bible revised by his command, the previous year, when he discovered that, as usually happens in first editions through hasty printing, many errors needing correction had crept into the text for which various causes were responsible, he conceived a wish to place the entire work on the anvil once more. This wish, which death prevented him from fulfilling, has now at last been carried out by his successor. . . .

PREFACE TO THE CLEMENTINE VULGATE, 1592.

. . . When the work of revising the Bible had been finished [Pope Sixtus] ordered it to be printed. Now when it was already in type and the Pope was *making ready for its publication*, he observed that not a few errors had crept in *through the fault of the press* [*preli vitio*]. As these errors seemed to necessitate fresh care and inquiry, he determined and decreed to have the whole work placed on the anvil anew. But death prevented him from executing his design, and Gregory XIV, who came to the throne after the twelve days' reign of Sixtus's successor Urban VII, undertook to carry out his intentions. Some distinguished Cardinals and other learned men were once more deputed for the task, but Gregory and Pope Innocent IX, who came after him, both died within a very short time. At length, early in the pontificate of Clement VIII who now governs the universal Church, the work to which Sixtus V had directed his energy was brought, with God's help, to a successful conclusion. . . .

AUTOBIOGRAPHY, 1613.

. . . The revised Bible could be issued without detriment to the honour of Pope Sixtus, if the *changes that had been made without justification* were removed as quickly as possible, and the Bible printed under Sixtus's own name, with a preface signifying that in the *first edition* of Sixtus *some errors of printers or others* had crept in, owing to haste. . . .

respectable guise, we may cite Dr. George Salmon, who lets himself go as follows in his celebrated lectures on 'The Infallibility of the Church':

> Bellarmine's original proposal was a delightful illustration of the skill which the Order to which he belongs is popularly believed to possess, in knowing how to insinuate a falsehood in words consistent with truth. He recommended that the faulty readings should be said to have occurred 'prae festinatione vel typographorum *vel aliorum*'—either the printers were to blame or *somebody else*. However, this evasion was disdained in the preface to the new edition. No mention is made of 'somebody else' and the errors are said to have occurred 'preli vitio.' The preface tells that when the work had been printed and when Pope Sixtus was going to publish it (implying that he had not published it), perceiving that several errors of the press had crept in, he determined to have the whole work placed anew on the anvil. But that Sixtus really had any such intention, is a statement for which there is no shadow of proof and no probability. The edition of Clement, also published as authentic, differed from that of Sixtus in more than two thousand places. . . . And it became evident that the work of editing the Bible required patience, learning, critical sagacity, and that this was a work to which 'infallibility' was unequal.[1]

Sir Frederic Kenyon, another distinguished scholar and the present Director of the British Museum, not only rejects Bellarmine's explanation as a lie, but also boldly assigns the real reason why the Sixtine Bible was suppressed, 'namely that the Jesuits had not forgiven Sixtus for placing one of Bellarmine's books on the *Index* and took this method of revenging themselves'![2] All of which shows what powerful people those Jesuits were. Dr. Salmon's chief reference was to James's *Bellum Papale*, which one would have thought was a little out of date. Sir Frederic Kenyon sends us to a really great Vulgate scholar, Dr. J. H. White, but alas, when we turn to him we are directed to the *Bellum Papale* once again.[3] James is, in fact, the central sun by whose light nearly all the other wanderers in this corner of the firmament of controversy shine. His attempt to refute the doctrine of Papal infallibility by collecting in a heap all the petty, non-doctrinal differences in the Bibles of the two Popes, has been proved worthless and foolish again and again,[1] and it is strange that eminent men should belittle themselves by appealing to his very questionable authority. Not even the shadow of an argument against Papal infallibility can be derived from a catalogue of trifling differences in the two Bibles, for the Catholic Church never taught that the authenticity of the Vulgate implied such verbal accuracy in its text as would exclude all future emendation. To anyone acquainted with the history of the Vulgate such a suggestion is preposterous, yet Dr. Salmon was not ashamed to make it the basis of an argument.

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[1] *The Infallibility of the Church*: Lectures delivered in the Divinity School of the University of Dublin. Third ed., reprinted 1923, pp. 227–228.

[2] *Handbook to the Textual Criticism of the New Testament*, 1901, p. 188.

[3] Cf. art. 'Vulgate' in Hastings' *Dictionary of the Bible*.

As regards the Bull *Aeternus Ille*, which Döllinger, Reusch [2], and other anti-papal writers have endeavoured for their own ends to invest with the authority of an *ex cathedra* decree, it has to be remembered, in the first place, that it is still an open question whether the Bull was ever duly promulgated. But even were the question definitely settled in the affirmative, the doctrine of infallibility would not be in the least affected. That this is so a candid inquirer may easily discover by reading the Bull. It is a very long document and three-quarters of it is simply an account of the earlier vicissitudes of the Vulgate text, the ruling of Trent on the question of authenticity, and the labours of Sixtus himself in the preparation of such an edition as the Council had had in view. We have already quoted in part the most significant of its sentences. 'Of our certain knowledge,' it ran, 'and by the fullness of Apostolical power, we decree and declare that the Latin Vulgate edition of the sacred text of both Old and New Testaments which was received as authentic by the Council of Trent, is without doubt or controversy to be considered this very edition which We now publish, after the best revision that it was in our power to secure. . . .'[3]

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[1] E.g. by H. Bukentop, *Lux de luce*, Amsterdam, 1628, lib. III, pp. 315 sqq. F. Amann, *Die Vulgata Sixtina*, Freiburg, 1912. Sechster Teil, pp. 108–114. The letters and documents connected with the Sixtine controversy which Père Le Bachelet has published, are extremely instructive as showing how firmly, and one might even say rigidly, the doctrine of Papal infallibility was believed in those days, three hundred years before its definition. *Bellarmin et la Bible Sixto-Clémentine*, pp. 153–167. Yet Catholics are always having Keenan's Catechism thrown at their heads !

[2] *Die Selbstbiographie des Cardinals Bellarmin*, pp. 124–125.

[3] 'Ex certa nostra scientia, deque Apostolicae potestatis plenitudine, statuimus, ac declaramus, eam Vulgatam sacrae tam veteris, quam novi Testamenti paginae Latinam Editionem, quae pro authentica a Concilio Tridentino recepta est, sine ulla dubitatione, aut controversia censendam esse hanc ipsam, quam nunc, prout optime fieri potuit, emendatam . . . evulgamus.' Cornely, *Introductio*, vol. I, p. 471.

Sixtus, then, did not decree and declare that his edition of the Vulgate was perfect in every respect, but only that it was as perfect as he had been able to make it, which was an entirely accurate statement. He did declare and decree, and that in solemn terms, that his edition was to be received as the Church's authentic version of the Scriptures, and we have now to see whether this ordinance could possibly be construed as an argument against infallibility. There can be no doubt that the precise meaning of the word 'authentic' in the decree of Trent was not grasped by many theologians until long after the close of the Council. Indeed, it continued to be a subject of active controversy among them for many years, as we learn from a letter, already mentioned, which Bellarmine addressed to Cardinal Sirleto from Louvain, 1 April 1575. In this he had said:

> I come now to some questions which are occupying my own mind. The first and chief of them is, what did the Council of Trent intend when in its fourth session it decreed that the Latin Vulgate was to be held authentic? For I find that there is the greatest divergence of views on this important matter among men of the highest eminence. Some openly affirm that our Latin Vulgate edition has been so approved by the Council that it is not now permissible, on any account, to say that there is a single sentence in this edition which is false or which does not convey the mind of the original writer. These men would prefer to slight the authority of the Hebrew and Greek codices rather than admit any lapse in the Vulgate text, and they teach that we possess the true and genuine sense of the Scriptures in this edition, just as much as if we had the sacred autographs of the original writers in our hands. Other authorities, on the contrary, hold that nothing of the kind was ever decreed by the Council. According to them, all that it decreed was that this ancient Vulgate edition was to be retained in the Church, as being the best, and that no other was to be used in scholastic lectures, in sermons, or in the liturgy. Yet though nothing whatever is to be found in this edition contrary to faith or morals, it cannot be denied that its Latin translator sometimes nods like the rest of men, and more than once has missed the true sense of the Scriptures. . . .[1]

On 17 January 1576, or less than a year after the date of the above letter, the sacred Congregation of the Council declared that in order to incur the penalties laid down in the decree of the Tridentine Fathers it was sufficient to change a sentence, a clause, a phrase, a word, a syllable, an iota even, contrary to the text of the Vulgate.[1] Bellarmine entirely ignored this declaration, as he knew that it was not authoritative. Cardinal Sirleto does not seem to have been of much assistance to him, so on his return to Rome from Belgium in 1576 he determined to begin investigations on his own account. The result of these was a most instructive dissertation on the Vulgate, written some time between the years 1586 and 1591.[2]

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[1] Le Bachelet, *Bellarmin avant son Cardinalat*, p. 92.

Blessed Robert explained the purpose of his essay in its title: 'De editione Latina vulgata, quo sensu a Concilio Tridentino definitum sit, ut pro authentica habeatur,'—in what sense did the Council of Trent define that the Latin Vulgate must be held as authentic? The general answer comes immediately:

> All the writers whom I have had an opportunity of consulting up to the present, seem to arrive at the following conclusion: the Vulgate must be considered as free from error on all questions of Catholic faith and morality, and it alone must be used in public worship and lectures in schools, even though in other respects it may have its faults.

The dissertation proper is merely the development of this thesis to which Bellarmine whole-heartedly subscribed. He first cites eleven authors, of whom several were present at the debates of Trent.[3] Then he brings five intrinsic proofs to the support of his position, which we may summarize as follows:

1°. Councils are not wont to depend on intuition or divination in their work, but rather to deduce from the Word of

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[1] This declaration has had a curious history. At first it misled many theologians into adopting the extreme views set forth in the earlier part of Bellarmine's letter to Sirleto. Later, its authenticity was called in question, some writers even regarding it as a Protestant invention. Its genuineness is now beyond question (cf. P. Batiffol, *La Vaticane de Paul III à Paul V*, Paris, 1890, p. 73), but it is also quite certain that it never possessed any binding authority. Cf. Franzelin, *De Traditione et Scriptura*, p. 568.

[2] Père Le Bachelet has an excellent section on the date of the Dissertation. His whole account of its discovery and publication by Widenhofer in 1749, and of the subsequent controversy between a writer in the *Journal de Trévoux* and the Jesuit Père Frévier is extremely interesting, but too long to repeat in this place. Cf. *Bellarmin et la Bible Sixto-Clémentine*, pp. 13–34. The Dissertation itself is given among the documents, no. 11, pp. 107–125.

[3] John Driedo (wrote 1550), Andrew Vega (1548), William van Linden (1558), Melchior Cano (1563), Sixtus of Siena (1566), Josse Ravesteyn (1568), Melchior Zangerus (1580), Diego Payva (1578), Francis Foreiro (1563), Jerome Oleaster (1556), and Gilbert Génébrard (1577). The extracts are very instructive, and put the meaning and intentions of the Tridentine Fathers beyond further question. The writers belonged to such important centres as Louvain, Venice, Cologne, Salamanca, Lyons, Antwerp, and Paris.

God, tradition, or other certain sources, conclusions contrary to the new errors with which they are faced. Now that the Latin Vulgate was authentic could not have been decided on any other grounds except its long use in the Church, as the Fathers of the Councils plainly declared. From this long use we most justifiably conclude that the Vulgate must be authentic in this sense that on no pretext can it be superseded in the public services of the Church and in lectures, and moreover, that in all matters pertaining to faith and morals it affords certain and authoritative guidance. But we may not conclude from this long use that the Vulgate text is to be preferred to the Greek or Hebrew sources, nor that the translator made no mistakes. Indeed, the contrary is obvious, for as everybody knows the Vulgate edition of the Psalms, the Book of Wisdom, the Book of Ecclesiasticus, the Books of the Machabees, and the whole of the New Testament, is not from the pen of St. Jerome, but of extreme antiquity. Nevertheless Pope St. Damasus ordered St. Jerome to revise this Latin edition of the New Testament in accordance with the Greek manuscripts. St. Jerome himself pointed out many mistakes in the Vulgate edition of the Psalms, and St. Hilary in his commentaries often reprehends the ignorance of the translator of this edition which we still use at the present day. Marius Victorinus says, in his work against the Arians, that the translator responsible for the phrase *Panem nostrum quotidianum* in St. Luke, did not understand the meaning of the Greek word *ἐπιοὺσιον*. These and similar passages from the Fathers (Bellarmine gives several more) plainly indicate that according to ecclesiastical tradition, the errors of the translator of the Vulgate may be noted and corrected from the original sources. It is altogether incredible that the Council of Trent should have wished to decide anything against the opinion of the Fathers.

2°. Councils are not wont to define any matters that are not necessary for the preservation of the faith, the condemnation of error, or the avoidance of danger. That it was not necessary for any of these reasons to define that some version of the Scriptures existed, faithfully agreeing in every sentence with the original, is doubly plain. First, it was believed in the Church for a thousand years and more, even by the Fathers and without any prejudice to the faith, that the translator of the Vulgate had occasionally made mistakes. Secondly, since in many places the manuscripts of the Vulgate differ considerably in their readings, it is impossible to know which is the true Vulgate text. Consequently, if the decree of the Council had approved the Vulgate edition in every respect, even in those places which had no bearing on faith or morals, such comprehensive approval would have been entirely useless.[1]

3⁰. In the decree of Trent, the Fathers say: 'Considering that no small profit would accrue to the Church of God, if it were made known which of all the Latin editions of the sacred books in actual circulation is to be esteemed authentic,' etc. There is mention here only of Latin editions, and the Vulgate is preferred, not to all other editions, but solely to other editions in that language. The Hebrew and Greek texts, as they are the original sources, are authentic of themselves, and do not need the approbation of a Council. The Catholic Church is not to be found in Latin countries alone, but also in Syria, Armenia, Arabia, Greece, etc. Who, then, will believe that the Council of Trent desired the Vulgate to be considered authentic in a sense so exclusive as to be equivalent to a declaration that the Greek and Syrian Churches do not possess and have not for centuries possessed an authentic version of the Scriptures?

The Divine Scriptures are the Church's chief treasure, but the greater part of it perishes if we say that the original sources are deserving of no credit and may be rejected as corrupted, for nothing would then remain but a single version, and it so fluctuating that scarcely two codices are to be found agreeing in everything. Indeed those deserve very ill of the Church who speak so meanly of the original writings of the Apostles and Prophets as not to hesitate to deny their authenticity.

4⁰. This argument is drawn from the absurd consequences which follow on the supposition that the Vulgate is authentic in every respect, even with regard to matters that have no bearing on faith or morals. In the first place, it would follow that, before the time of St. Jerome, the Church possessed no authentic Scriptures, for St. Jerome's revision differs materially from the ancient Latin version, and occasionally to such an extent from the Hebrew and Greek that it is impossible to reconcile them. Secondly, it would follow that an unauthentic edition of the Bible is sometimes used in the Divine Office, for St. Peter's has a very ancient Psalter of its own which differs very considerably from the Vulgate Psalter. Psalm xciv, *Venite exultemus*, which is read in the universal Church at the beginning of Matins, is taken from the Roman Psalter. On the feast of the Epiphany the same psalm is read from the Vulgate Psalter, and considerable differences may be observed in the two versions. Many other such instances might be given. Thirdly, it would follow that the translation of the Psalms contained in the Vulgate is authentic, whereas the much better translation made by St. Jerome is unauthentic, though the only reason why the latter failed to secure its place in the Vulgate was because the Church did not wish to trouble and grieve the faithful who were used to the older version. Was it, then, only while he translated the Psalms that the Holy Ghost deserted St. Jerome? Finally, it would follow that the Church had made authentic, not only Jerome's translation, but also his paraphrases and explanations. His version of Ecclesiastes and the Book of Proverbs is rather a paraphrase than a translation proper, 'and this I do not assert without reason,' Bellarmine continues. 'I have recently studied the Hebrew text of Ecclesiastes, the Canticle of Canticles, and the Book of Proverbs, with much care, and compared it with the Vulgate translation. Though I admit that Jerome has usually followed the meaning of the original, still he exposed himself to considerable danger of error. As these Hebrew books are so obscure on account of the poverty of the language that it is often necessary to guess at the meaning, who will guarantee that Jerome never went astray, I will not say in translating, but in explaining them? But it may be answered that the Church in her General Council has given us the necessary guarantee. That, however, is the very point in dispute, for what we are trying to determine is the matter to which the Church extends her approbation.'

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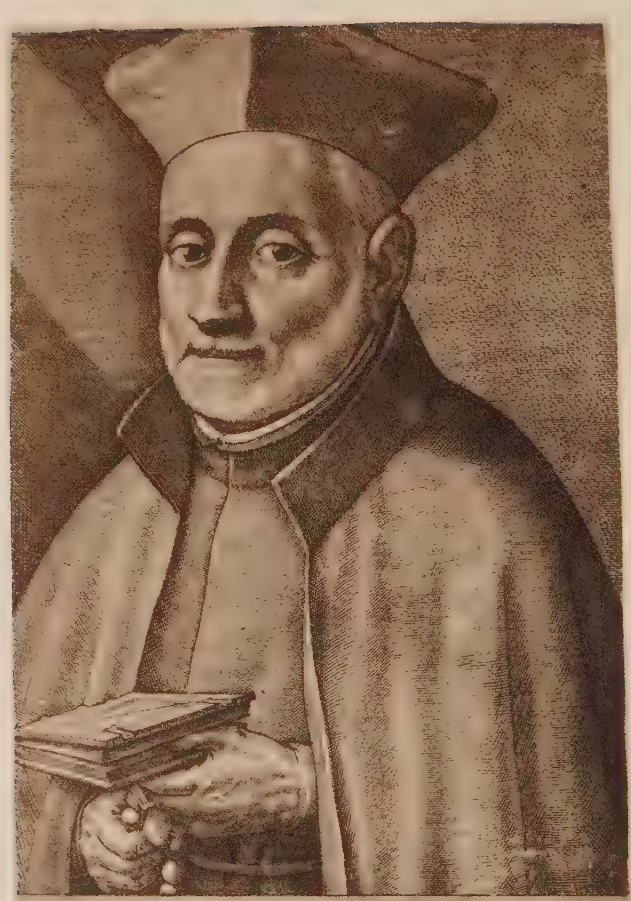
[1] This good piece of reasoning disposes of the declaration issued by the Congregation of the Council in 1576, to which reference was made above.

The fifth proof offered by Blessed Robert is a long list of passages from the Vulgate, which he gives his reasons for believing to be faulty translations. These we need not repeat. From what has been already said in the dissertation, it is quite evident that when Pope Sixtus decreed and declared that his edition of the Vulgate must be regarded as authentic in the sense understood by the Council of Trent, he was not forcing a false belief on the consciences of the faithful but claiming assent for a truth so true as almost to be a truism. The question of authenticity had nothing to do with questions of scholarship and textual criticism. The Sixtine Bible was



CLAVDIVS AQVA-VIVA NEAPOLIT. V. GENERALIS
ræpoſitus Societatis IESV: quam 34. annos feliciter rexit. Religioſa
orum comitate atq; induſtria. Quieuit in Dom. an. 1615. 31. Ianuar. Ætat. 74

undoubtedly authentic. As for its textual perfection, all that the Pope said was that it was as perfect as he had been able to make it. Where then, we may ask, did his infallibility prove ‘ unequal ’ to its work, as Dr. Salmon alleges ? Of course, if a man wishes to make a travesty of the Catholic doctrine by implying what the Vatican Council never dreamt of implying, namely that infallibility must protect the Pope’s private scholarship, private morals, or private anything else, then it is quite easy to show that it has often been a failure, and not least in the person of Sixtus the Fifth.

A curious and rather amusing incident happened during the height of the Sixtine controversy, in connection with the question of infallibility. The professor of philosophy in the Jesuit house at Ingolstadt was then a certain Father George Feder. He seems to have been worried about the Bull of Sixtus, and made an imprudent remark on the matter, which was reported to the General of the Society of Jesus. On 2 April 1594 Aquaviva wrote to the culprit’s Provincial, Father Ferdinand Alber :

> I wish to make known to you that I have been greatly displeased with what I have heard about Father Feder. He has spread some rumour, the report says, to the effect that he had learned from certain Roman Fathers the absurd opinion that the Pope can err. Your Reverence knows that he should on no account have said such a thing, and I would like you to admonish him seriously, in my name, to be more discreet in his speech.[1]

On 2 May 1594 Feder sent his defence to the General :

> Very Reverend Father in Christ, Pax Christi. I was on a month’s mission at Easter time, during which I delivered several exhortations and sermons, heard a great number of confessions, and cured some abuses. In a word, I appear to have done my work, God be praised, to the edification, satisfaction, and profit of everybody. But lest I should wax haughty over the achievement, Reverend Father Provincial comes on the scene, and sends me a serious letter in your Paternity’s name to signify that you were greatly displeased with the report you had heard about me. . . . I think that your Paternity was not rightly informed, and that I do not deserve so serious an admonition. It seemed good then, in the Lord, to write and tell you what really happened. May the Lord God be the witness of all I say. As to the principal charge, then, be it known to your Paternity that I told our Father Rector alone, and told him only on one occasion, that when I was in Rome I understood Father

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[1] Le Bachelet, *Bellarmin et la Bible*, etc., p. 153.

Bellarmine to have made the following statement in connection with the Sixtine Bible: The Pope, as Pope, can err. For a long time I was unwilling to believe that he could have asserted this, but I had the truth of the story confirmed for me in many and weighty words. Still my doubts were not at an end, and I wanted to question Father Bellarmine himself but forgot all about it before leaving the city. . . . From your Paternity's letter I gather that the story has been reported and understood in a mistaken manner. For who could justly censure what I said, and said truly? And yet your Paternity writes as seriously as if first of all, I had made an unqualified statement, then, as if I had made it falsely, and in the last place, as if I had made it to several people, not one of which charges is true.

Your Very Reverend Paternity's servant in Christ and unworthy son,

GEORGE FEDER.[1]

Aquaviva wrote back telling Father George that he ought not to let himself become so excited, as no one wanted to do him any harm. The report had been sent in all charity, and he should try to cast away his dark suspicions. One thing is quite certain, however, though the General does not insist on it, and that is that he *had* misinterpreted Bellarmine. In his Controversies, this very exact theologian had made a careful distinction between two classes of Pontifical decisions and decrees. One class had to do with universal matters, common to all the Church, such as definitions of faith and decisions on moral problems. In making these, the Pope as Pope could not err. The second class dealt with particular facts which concerned only a special group or a small number of individuals, such, for instance, as the promotion of somebody to the episcopate, the legitimacy of this promotion, or the opportuneness of deposing one who had been promoted. The Pope, even as Pope, and supported by his usual advisers, or even assisted by a General Council, might make a mistake in such matters, 'which chiefly depend on the information and testimony of men.'[2]

9. Turning now to the three sets of charges against Bellarmine arising out of his three documents, it will be convenient to deal with the most serious of them first, for an answer to it includes by implication an answer to the other two. Mgr. Baumgarten, a leading German scholar and the most active opponent of Bellarmine's beatification in 1923, is confident

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[1] Le Bachelet, *Bellarmin avant son Cardinalat*, pp. 341–342.

[2] *De Romano Pontifice*, lib. IV, cap. ii.

that the principal suggestion of the Preface is a 'suggestio falsi.'[1] Pope Sixtus had no intention of placing his work on the anvil anew, because, as a matter of fact, he had already promulgated the Bull *Aeternus Ille* in full official form at the time when Bellarmine supposes him to have been reconsidering his work. Baumgarten himself had the good fortune to discover the original of the Bull in 1907, and, sure enough, on the back of it was an official attestation that it had been promulgated on 10 April 1590. *Causa finita est*, said the anti-Bellarmine scholars with a good deal of satisfaction, but there are not wanting eminent men who consider that their rejoicings were premature. Even the discovery of the Bull has not explained away a certain passage in an old, forgotten manual of theology, that was once very popular. Its author was a very distinguished Jesuit theologian named Adam Tanner, who, to satisfy the inquiring souls of his students at Ingolstadt, had written to Aquaviva in the summer of 1610 for some definite information about the Sixtine controversy. The mere fact that he was obliged to write is an indication that some mystery surrounded the supposed publication of the Bull. The General, in answer to his request, commissioned certain Jesuits to make a thorough investigation of the whole matter, and then instructed his German assistant, Father Ferdinand Alber, to communicate their report to Father Tanner. Alber's first letter ran as follows :

> After diligent inquiry and discussion, those who were deputed for the purpose have given an answer concerning the Bible of Pope Sixtus which removes all difficulty and with which everybody rightly agrees. The answer is that it is quite certain that the Bull in connection with this Bible was not promulgated. The fact that the promulgation is not to be found in the registers [of the Papal chancery] is conclusive proof of this, and, in addition, Cardinal Bellarmine testifies that, on his return from France, he learned from several Cardinals, who spoke with absolute certainty about the matter, that the Bull had not been promulgated. Further, be it known to your Reverence, that the present Holy Father [Paul V] has borne witness to the truth of this statement.

A week later, 4 September 1610, Father Alber wrote again giving further evidence :

> At the time when this Bible made its first appearance, some people began to urge that the Pope could err, as he seemed to have

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[1] *Die Vulgata Sixtina von* 1590 *u. ihre Einführungsbulle*, Münster, 1911.

erred already in the matter of the Bible. To this argument Father Azor answered in a public disputation that the Bull promulgating the Bible had not been officially published, notwithstanding the fact that the printed copy bore the signatures of the *Cursores*. It was the typographers who had inserted these in advance, such being the will of the Pope in order to avoid delay when the time came for publication. Father Eudaemon-Joannes, who was present at the disputation, is a witness of this fact.[1]

From these letters it is plain that anyone who wishes to impute a lie to Bellarmine must also be prepared to fix the same serious charge on Pope Paul V, Claudius Aquaviva, several cardinals, and a number of other eminent men who, though they were Jesuits, had possibly the first elements of honour in their souls. They were all contemporary with the events to which they bore witness, and Paul V was at the time a member of Pope Sixtus's household. Of course it is possible to reject what they say off-hand, as inspired and prejudiced, but truth is a shy goddess and may not care for such a brusque style of wooing. How, on the other hand, are we to explain the official attestation on the Bull? Easily enough, it might be answered, for Father Azor who was in Rome at the time has given us the clue. It was put on beforehand so that when the day of promulgation came there might be no further delay. If, indeed, this was the only instance of such anticipatory action in putting signatures to Bulls, we might reasonably doubt its occurrence, but the procedure was by no means rare. Further, it is quite certain that at a time subsequent to the date when the Bull is supposed to have been promulgated, Pope Sixtus was busily at work correcting not only his Bible, but this very Bull itself.[2] And again, if the Bull was fully promulgated how are we to account for the complete silence on the matter maintained by the well-informed *Avvisi di Roma*? Mgr. Baumgarten made something of a sensation by his discovery of the original Bull as well as two separate printed copies. Now, when other Bulls are published, copies in vast numbers are sent all over the world to the various Catholic dioceses, and it is very difficult to explain why of all the specimens of the *Aeternus Ille* which must have been scattered over Europe, if it was promulgated, there should be but three lonely survivors. Had the undiscovered copies existed, they would have been every whit as dangerous to the credit of the Holy See as the Sixtine Bibles themselves, yet in the measures taken for the recovery of the latter, there is not a single word about the Bull.

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[1] Tanner's *Theologia Scholastica*, Ingolstadt, 1627, vol. II, disp. I de Fide, q. iv, dub. v, n. 265.

[2] The evidence for this is a letter of Olivares to King Philip, written on 30 June 1590, or more than nine weeks after the Bull is supposed to have been published. Le Bachelet, *Bellarmin et la Bible Sixto-Clémentine*, pp. 194–195.

What then is to be our conclusion about the whole of this affair, of which the reader has probably had more than enough? The arguments and evidence which Mgr. Baumgarten and Dr. Amann have brought forward seem to show that there was some kind of publication, or at least that the Bull was widely known, but it still remains extremely doubtful whether all the formalities required for an official promulgation were fulfilled. That is all that can be said about the question in the present state of our knowledge, and surely no reasonable man will claim that it is enough by which to convict Bellarmine of a deliberate lie. The statement in the Clementine Preface that Sixtus, dissatisfied with the misprints in his Bible, had determined to place the whole work anew on the anvil, would not be very probable if it necessarily meant that the Pope intended to discard the results of his first effort, and begin the revision all over again. This is the meaning which Bellarmine's learned detractors try to force on the words, but one of the best modern authorities on the history of the Vulgate is not of their opinion.

> Une autre explication nous paraît être plus naturelle [writes Dom Hildebrand Höpfl]. Sixte-Quint voulait maintenir sa Bible, mais voyant les *errata typographica*, il se proposait d'en faire le plus tôt possible une nouvelle édition plus exacte, après ou même avant que la première édition fut épuisée.[1]

Many good men besides Dr. Salmon have waxed scornful over the apparent discrepancies in Bellarmine's story. There were two Bellarmines, they tell us, one an ordinary, humdrum child of Adam looking for his revenge, and the other a clever, calculating Jesuit, out to save the Pope's face at whatever cost to truth and honour. Bellarmine the first wrote the memorandum for Pope Gregory in 1591 and the Autobiography of 1613, in both of which documents Sixtus is plainly taxed with having been himself responsible for very many of the errors in his Bible. To save the credit of the Holy See, Gregory is advised when publishing the Zagarolo revision to attribute these errors to 'various causes', to 'the printers or somebody else.' Then in the preface to the Clementine Bible, Bellarmine the second comes on the scene and conveniently forgetting the various causes and somebody else, throws all the odium on the unfortunate printers, his aim being to delude the world into believing that the new Vulgate was none other than Pope Sixtus's own Bible without the misprints. To answer these charges in detail would take far too long, but it might fairly be said in general that the evidence on which they are based is open to quite a different interpretation.

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[1] *Revue Bénédictine*, avril 1913, p. 241.

Though Bellarmine was mainly responsible for the famous Preface, it is known that other pens besides his had a share in it too, and it is certain that his work was carefully censored and revised.[1] Consequently no one is justified in fathering any particular phrase or any particular omission (e.g. of the 'somebody else') on him. And even were it proved that he was responsible, is it such a terrible crime not to say all that one knows when the knowledge would only injure the reputation of the illustrious dead, and be of no possible advantage to the living? As for the famous expression 'preli vitio', one might ask whether it necessarily includes only misprints in the technical sense of the word. If so, a good deal of Bellarmine's Preface makes sheer nonsense, as it tells us that several Popes, Cardinals, and learned men were busily engaged for many months correcting ordinary misprints, which the slowest and most incompetent of proof-readers could have corrected in a tenth of the time by merely comparing the original manuscript of the Bible with the faulty copies.[2] This introduces us into the atmosphere of comic opera, and if Bellarmine's detractors like to carry on their activities there, nobody can prevent them. Is it not far more reasonable to believe that in the term 'preli vitio' Bellarmine meant to include not only the mechanical errors of the printers but also the regrettable changes of 'somebody else'?

It might, indeed, be said with justice, and with a certain amount of regret, that his language, or the language of those who revised his Preface, is purposely vague, but that is a very different thing from saying that he told a deliberate lie. During the process of his beatification, a Neapolitan secular priest, who had known him personally, testified as follows : ' I know in particular that he hated lies with all his heart. When he was Archbishop of Capua and I was at the seminary there, I used to meet him occasionally. If anyone who was speaking with him chanced to utter a falsehood, he would be seen at once to get very hot and red in the face. Nor did he try to conceal his great displeasure, as it appeared impossible to him that a Christian could be guilty of a lie. All these facts I have from men who made personal experience of their truth.'[1]

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[1] The Duke of Sessa writing to Philip II from Rome, 22 December 1592, speaks of the Preface as having been weighed and meditated 'con gran consideracion.' Le Bachelet, *Bellarmin et la Bible*, etc., p. 199.

[2] '. . . non pauca . . . *preli vitio* irrepsisse, quae iterata diligentia indigere viderentur. Id vero . . . Gregorius XIV . . . perficere aggressus est, amplissimis aliquot Cardinalibus aliisque doctissimis viris ad hoc iterum deputatis.'

Blessed Robert's scholarly interest in the revision of the Vulgate did not end with the issue of Pope Clement's edition. For many years afterwards he corresponded on points of textual criticism with his ' most sweet friend ' Francis Lucas, the greatest Biblical authority of that age. Lucas sent him all his learned books for criticism and honoured him with the dedication of one, ' in memory of the kindness that admitted me to your friendship when you were a professor at Louvain and your goodness to me after you had returned to Rome.'[2]

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[1] *Summarium*, num. 13, § 29.

[2] Le Bachelet, *Bellarmin et la Bible Sixto-Clémentine*, pp. 170–171.

CHAPTER XIV

A RULER WHO DID NOT HINDER MUSIC

> Rectorem te posuerunt? noli extolli; esto in illis quasi unus ex ipsis. Curam illorum habe . . . et non impedias musicam.
>
> *Ecclus.* xxxii. 1–5.

1. It was the wish of St. Ignatius that his sons who had taken the four solemn vows should live in special 'houses of the professed' when they were not occupying some post in the colleges or on the missions. These houses were to be patterns of strict observance for the rest of his Society, especially in the matter of poverty, and life in them, for ordinary flesh and blood, was meant to be anything but sweet. As soon as Bellarmine had vacated his chair of theology, he felt that his place was in one of those stern colonies, and no longer in that dear Collegio Romano whose every stone he loved. His superiors, however, knew that the Romano would go into mourning if he were taken away, so to save everybody's feelings they found a new post for him there. In 1588 he was named the official spiritual director of the College and in that capacity had the great, lonely, flaming soul of Aloysius Gonzaga to mould and restrain. The dearest of friendships sprang up between the two, but Aloysius gently refused, all the same, to follow the counsels of moderation in penance which his solicitous confessor was for ever urging upon him. Asked one day why he, who was usually so quick to obey, refused to listen to this wise advice, he answered: 'I often thought of listening to it, only I noticed that the men who gave it to me did not put it in practice themselves.'[1] Poor Father Robert had nothing to say against that shrewd *Tu quoque*, for the severity of his own asceticism was known to everybody.

Near midnight on 20 June 1591 he stood, the picture of sorrow, beside the bed of his young friend. 'Tell me,

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[1] Cepari, *Vita B. Aloysii*, 1609, p. 254.

Luigi,' he whispered, 'tell me when it is time to say the prayers.' After a little while the dying Saint looked up at him: 'Now, Father, it is time,' and an hour later he was in Heaven. Robert Bellarmine was the first of his friends to put up a statue to him in his heart. 'Just as no one knew him better,' say the Bollandists, 'so no one bore such tireless testimony of both word and deed to his holiness, and no one venerated his memory with such tender love as the last of his confessors.'[1] Ever after, to the end of his life, the 21st of June was one of Father Robert's most sacred anniversaries, and he never failed on that day to make a pilgrimage to the shrine of his spiritual child at the Annunziata, and to visit the infirmary where he had died. On 21 June 1608, when he was a famous Cardinal, he was asked to speak about Aloysius in the Church of the Roman College.

> Three great privileges were his, to which we cannot aspire [he said]. The rest of us, like the labourers in the parable, are called at the first or third or eleventh hour, that is when we are boys, or young men, or getting old. But his call came before the first hour, when he was only a child. He used to tell me that he considered his seventh year to have been the year of his conversion. Then again, he never suffered from fleshly allurements, even in his thoughts, and he is the only one I have known who was so singularly blessed. His third privilege was to be free of all distractions in his prayers, and how great a privilege that was, we who try to pray know best. St. Augustine says that one of the proofs of God's meekness is the way He puts up with our roving wits. I asked Luigi once how on earth he was able so to compose his mind in prayer as to pass a whole hour without the least distraction. Do you know what his answer was? 'The real wonder, Father, is, how anybody could possibly turn his mind to other things while standing in the presence of God.'
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> But let us leave these inimitable glories alone, and think rather what we, old and imperfect as we are, can learn from the life of one who was perfect and young. First there was his great strong faith which made him spend the whole week preparing to receive our Lord on Sunday morning. Holy Communion is, indeed, the great test of our faith, for how can anyone believe with all his heart that the Lord of Glory is truly present in the Blessed Sacrament, and yet go to Him with a cold, distracted heart? About his patience, I scarcely know what to say. During most of his life he was a martyr to headaches, and yet he never uttered a word of complaint. So great was the fever of desire that came

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[1] *Acta Sanctorum*, Junii, t. IV, p. 888.

over him to spend himself in the service of the stricken poor, that he told me a short time before his last illness, he felt certain this desire was a sign of his approaching end. In that long last illness itself, he was the very pattern of patience. Scarcely anything remained of his poor, wasted, little body except the skin and bones, and cruel sores, yet when asked how he was, he would gaily answer 'Grand.'

I used to notice how when out walking with a lay-brother companion, he would contrive to give him the place of honour. Indeed his life was all lowliness and he was always longing for the lowliest offices, especially the ones which other men avoided, such as teaching the smallest boys in the schools. Nor was there the slightest trace of affectation in his manner. The desire to be united with God consumed him like a great fire. Once I begged him to pray that his life might be spared as I knew what a holy influence he would exert on the flocks of boys in our colleges. 'Father,' he answered, 'how could I possibly ask to stay?' Death had no terrors for him at all, and he gave me the signal to say the prayers for his departing soul, without a tremor. He answered each of the invocations as calmly and firmly as if it were some other man who lay there dying, for whom he prayed. . . . Yes indeed, God took delight in His servant Aloysius, and taught us through the miracle of his life that there is no such thing as coming of age with Him, for boys and girls can beat us greybeards, in the race to perfection. Let us thank God, then, who lit for our guidance such an eager and splendid flame, and let us keep our eyes on it, while our dark journey lasts. We especially, who were his familiar friends on earth, should pray to him that by his intercession we may join him at last in Heaven. Amen.[1]

From his knowledge of the special gifts and goodness of Aloysius, Father Robert used to say he was sure that St. Thomas of Aquin, when young, must have looked like his twin brother. In one part of the *Summa*, that holy Doctor, speaking about vocal prayer, signalizes three grades of attention which are necessary, and shows that the most important and highest grade consists in fixing the mind on God. 'Sometimes,' he continues, 'this attention becomes so great that the mind forgets everything else, *sicut dicit Hugo de Sancto Victore*.'[2] This little phrase, 'as Hugo of St. Victor says,' coming from one whose every prayer, almost, turned into an ecstasy, is as good as a whole treatise on the divine self-forgetfulness which we call the virtue of humility. Robert Bellarmine himself had many of the traits of St. Thomas, but this one of reticence about his own high spiritual experiences was the most marked of all.

[1] *Acta Sanctorum*, Junii, t. IV, pp. 1151–1153. [2] *Secunda Secundae*, 83, 13.

When he speaks of the converse of God with His lovers, he needs must introduce Ignatius, or Aloysius, or Francis of Assisi to tell about its triumphs and sweetness, and there is never an *Ego* in the story, except when it deals with struggle or defeat.

2. Father Robert had more than two hundred young men under his spiritual care, and over each his affection brooded as tenderly as if that soul were the only one that had a claim on him. The boys, for they were only boys, who had just come from the noviceship were treated by him with peculiar reverence. His door was open to them all, at every hour of the day and night, and when they entered, he would immediately stand up and take off his biretta, no matter how busy he might be. The Pope, the cardinals, and his own superiors, scarcely ever left him without some big commission, yet so free and detached did he keep his soul that he gave each of the young students who visited him the impression that he considered their little troubles to be the most important business of all. We are told that he had an almost magical power of consoling people and making them forget their frets and grievances, and there was nothing which he urged so tirelessly on those who had to teach the young or work in any way for others, as to imitate the meekness of Christ, which was the sovereign means of gaining hearts and overcoming every difficulty.

Lancicius, the great ascetical writer, was one of those who attended his weekly exhortations at this time.

> I used always to come away from them [wrote this eminently competent witness] as inflamed and on fire with the love of virtue and the horror of all imperfection, as if I had been through a furnace. These exhortations marked for me the beginning of a new and far more fervent life than I had led in the noviceship. Indeed it was a common saying then that Father Bellarmine had converted me, and the saying was quite true, because, after the grace of God, his exhortations were the most powerful and efficacious influence which ever came into my spiritual life.[1]

This same saintly witness gives us, in addition, an all too rare glimpse of him at his prayers : ‘ I used to watch him while he said Mass, and I noticed his face become so scarlet with the ardour of his devotion that it seemed the blood must burst from his veins. He celebrated with as much fervour, reverence, care, and holy intentness of mind, as if he saw God our Lord standing there before him.'[1]

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[1] The Roman Process of 1622, fol. 41.

Nine of Father Robert's published exhortations are on the love of God, and from these we may quote a few typical passages to illustrate his quaintly metaphorical style. It has not the same charm for us as it had for Lancicius but nevertheless the spiritual wisdom conveyed in its tropes is as deep as any mystic could desire:

> Love is the King of all the passions, the first and strongest of them all. Why does a man yearn to possess any object? Because he loves it. Why does he take delight in its possession? Because he loves it. Why does he fear and hate anything? Because it is the opposite of some other thing which he loves. Just as a petty prince can never conquer a powerful king, so can the other passions never prevail over love. If the king is to be overcome, it must be by another king greater than he, and if one love is to lower its flag, it will only be to another love more vehement. Ay, and the earthly love in man's heart is a very noble and spirited King, that will not be roughly entreated. Use force and threats, and he will cast them back with scorn; block up one road from his castle, and you will find him riding away by another. What remedy then have we against him? Only one, dear brothers, another love, the love eternal. The little loves of the flesh, of food and drink, and pleasant converse with one's fellows, became like a bitter cross to St. Francis because his heart was filled with that love whose horizons are not closed by the Ganges or Caucasus. He used to say that he found it very difficult to attend even to his most ordinary bodily needs, for the more the love of God fills a man's heart, the less room is there in it for any natural desire. . . .
>
> This love of charity is the living water of which our Lord spoke to the woman of Samaria, water which causes all green loveliness and flowers to spring up in the garden of a man's soul. You might plough and dig the desert sands for a thousand years and have never a blade of grass for your pains, but let the rain fall upon them, and immediately the waste places stir into life and clothe themselves with verdure. *Anima mea sicut terra sine aqua tibi*, said David. Without charity our souls remain always unproductive, for even though the habits of virtue may be in us, they are sterile and moribund. . . . Where, then, are we to find a little of this water? We need not wander over the world in search of it, dear brothers, because like the rain, it falls only from Heaven. *Pluviam voluntariam segregavit hereditati suae*. . . . It is a free rain that has no certain seasons of spring-time or autumnal bounty, for it is altogether in God's keeping, and comes only when He chooses

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[1] Bartoli, *Vita*, p. 348.

to send it. What we must do then is to pray constantly for it with all our hearts. And supposing we find it difficult to pray because our souls are hard and dry and devotionless, then let us do as the parched earth does which yawns open, and so in a manner cries for the rain. A humble recognition of our need is often more eloquent to the ears of God than many prayers.[1]

The brotherly love and forbearance, which is the other side of the love of God, was one of Blessed Robert's favourite themes :

> His tender mercies are over all His works, and we show ourselves to be His true sons, if we bear true love to others, especially to those who can make us no return. The kindness of St. Francis went out to the poor beasts themselves but, as in the story of our Father Ignatius, it was sick men who experienced the full tenderness of his charity. In this the two men were very like one another. Both of them desired to see their sick quiet, and patient, and bearing themselves as poor religious men ought. But meantime both took every conceivable precaution that the sufferers should lack nothing. St. Francis was not ashamed to go out and beg meat and other things for the sick, and he used to procure little delicacies for them which he would never have accepted for himself. . . . Indeed he could not look upon any one in affliction without his heart melting within him, nor could he bide a single minute before running to their assistance. That is the test of real charity, to love the poor, the wretched, and the loveless. It is easy enough to feel drawn to good, healthy people who have pleasant manners, but that is only natural love and not charity. A mother does not love her sick, deformed child because he is lovable, but because she is his mother, and we must pray the Holy Ghost to put into our hearts that selfless devotion which nature has put into hers. And now let us see how even in this life brotherly love will profit us. Peace and union are the most necessary of all things for men who live in common, and nothing serves so well to establish and maintain them as the forbearing charity whereby we put up with one another's defects. There is no one who has not his faults, and who is not in some way a burden to others, whether he be a superior or a subject, an old man or a young man, a scholar or a dunce. If I refuse to put up patiently with your faults, or you refuse to put up with mine, we become strangers to one another, and the results for community life are disastrous. When two pieces of wood are placed together in the shape of an inverted V, if each supports the other, both will stand, but if they do not, both fall to the ground.

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[1] *Exhortationes Domesticæ* (1899), pp. 131, 132, 134, 136–137.

As this matter is one of such great consequence, try to look upon the defects of your companions as a kind of special medicine and cross prepared for you by God. There are many people who willingly practise penances which they have chosen for themselves, but who refuse to put up with their neighbours' faults, though that is the penance which God wants them to bear. When our bodily health is in question, we are not such fools as to prefer our own medicine to the doctor's. Then again remember that you, too, have your defects, which others mercifully overlook, so it is only fair that you should repay them with an equal tolerance.[1]

3. Very many passages of Blessed Robert's printed exhortations end with an abrupt and dumb 'etc.', because he had not time to write out his thoughts in full. The story of his life as spiritual Father has dozens of these 'etceteras' in it, for after his return from France he was appointed consultor to various Roman Congregations, and given, besides, very important work in connection with the revision of the Vulgate, the Martyrology, and the Breviary, and the preparation of the *Ratio Studiorum*. Finally, on 18 December 1592, the General of the Society of Jesus installed him as Rector of the great College which owed so much of its glory to his labours. Everybody was delighted except himself, says a writer who knew him personally.[2] It was the custom in those days for a Rector on assuming office to make known in a public exhortation the policy which he intended to pursue. Bellarmine chose for his text the words from Ecclesiasticus which stand at the head of this chapter: 'Have they made thee ruler (*rectorem*)? Be not lifted up. Be among them as one of them. Have care of them . . . and hinder not music.' His commentary amounted to this, that he would try as well as ever he could to act the part of a good *maestro di cappella* who makes little fuss in his conducting, and directs the singers with a scarcely perceptible movement of his baton.[3] 'To this end,' says Fuligatti, 'that perfect harmony might be assured, he begged them all, not only to help him with their prayers, but to tell him plainly if they saw any fault in his conducting, for the common good was his one and only aim. It is impossible to describe the earnestness with which he made this request.' No one, it seems, took the Rector at his word, so again and again he begged the favour anew. Anyone might come to

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[1] *Exhortationes*, pp. 46–48.

[2] Fuligatti, *Vita*, p. 107.

[3] Fuligatti, *l.c.*, p. 107.

his room, he said, at whatever hour of the day or night they liked best, or if they did not care to make known their complaint or suggestion by word of mouth, they could write it out and then 'push the piece of paper under his door.' And they could be quite certain that he would not fail to make its contents the subject of his deepest consideration in the sight of God.

He began the work of reformation with himself. In his room there was a very nice desk with most convenient drawers of chestnut wood for Father Rector's papers, and above his prie-dieu there hung an oil-painting of some sacred subject. Both were banished at once, the desk to the sacristy to hold the altar-linen, and the picture to the corridors.[1] In the process of his beatification, one witness, at a loss for words in which to describe his practice of the first vow, fell back on the delightful privileges of the Italian language, and said that he had always lived 'poverissimamente' in religion. Another word much used to express the substance of his life was 'hilarità' —he was gay. Anyone who came to his room was invariably received with smiling courtesy, the Rector himself drawing out a chair for them and making them feel at home at once. He did not believe in ceremony or a sour face. In the old Louvain days, he wrote on one occasion in accordance with his duty to give the General, Father Mercurian, an account of their domestic affairs. One point on which the consultors were expected to express their views was the Rector's behaviour, and this was Bellarmine's comment:

> As I have had occasion to inform your Reverence before, Father Rector does not show that affectionate kindliness to the brothers which is necessary if they are to approach him as a father, and make known to him their spiritual needs. He comes to recreation but rarely, and when he does come he is too liberal with his admonitions, reprehending rather harshly every little ebullition of high spirits. The result of this is that he is ordinarily less loved than feared.[2]

Father Robert himself used to stay away from recreation sometimes, but this was to give each member of his big community a better chance of being able to see him in private should they so desire. There was another reason, too, which caused him to sacrifice the pleasure which he always found in the companionship of his brother Jesuits. His commentary on the text of Ecclesiasticus in his inaugural exhortation was not entirely metaphorical, for as one who knew him well records, he loved music—*delectabatur musica*[1]—and believed greatly in it as a potent defence against those noon-day devils of boredom and irritation from which the best-ordered recreations are not immune. His voice was not very good, but he played the violin, lute, and other instruments with much skill, and was also something of a composer. During those hours stolen from recreation, he used to copy out and arrange great numbers of motets for the Fathers and Brothers to sing together afterwards in the joy of their hearts.[2] It was probably at this time that the Roman College acquired possession of a book, published in Venice in 1581, entitled *Madrigals and Neapolitan songs for six voices, composed by Giovanni di Macque*. Just the thing for us, thought the happy Rector, as he hummed the pleasant little melodies, but when he studied the words, he said something else, for they were all about love, and the moonlight, and a certain signorina's blue eyes and golden hair. The signorina plainly had to go, so Father Robert, remembering, perhaps, the device of Pope Sixtus when correcting his Vulgate, decided to cover up all the references to her with little slips of paper bearing words more suitable for Jesuits to sing. There were 105 pieces to be done, but a large number did not require much changing to 'make them talk like Christians.' Thus it was sometimes enough to write 'te' with a capital T, or 'Dio' instead of 'mio', and the love-song became straightway a hymn. In the Roman process of 1712, twenty-one specimens of the original and revised versions are printed side by side, from which we may here quote a few lines:

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[1] Fuligatti, *Vita*, p. 108.
[2] Le Bachelet, *Bellarmin avant son Cardinalat*, p. 84.

Cantiones Prophanae.	Cantiones Sacrae.
Dico spesso al mio Core	Dico spesso al cor mio
Solo fuggendo può vincere Amore	Solo volando puoi trovar Iddio
Et chi non sà fuggire	E chi non sà volare
Resti sicuro di sua man perire.	Resti sicuro di non lo trovare.

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[1] Giovanni Persino in his manuscript *Memorie*. Persino was a priest at the Penitenzieria of St. Peter's, of which Bellarmine became Rector some years later.

[2] Fuligatti, *Vita*, p. 108.

Cantiones Prophanae.	Cantiones Sacrae
La Salamandra se nel foco dura	La Salamandra se nel foco dura
Miracolo non è che'l fà natura.	Miracolo non è che il fa Natura
Ma che voi nel mio Core,	Ma che Voi gran Signore,
Ch'è tutto fiamme, e foco	Che sete fiamma, e foco
Essendo ghiaccio ritroviate loco	In Cor di ghiaccio ritroviate loco
Questo sì, ch'è miracolo d'Amore.	Questo sì, ch'è miracolo d'Amore.[1]

It was not only his efforts to brighten their daily recreations which endeared the new Rector to his community. In a hundred other little ways he showed that he was thinking of them constantly, and of their bodily comfort as well as their spiritual needs. He shared all the common duties of the house with the rest, and insisted on having his turn in the scullery, and in sweeping the galleries. During the hot, holiday months of September and October he used to send once or twice a week for a few of the hard-worked lay-brothers, and giving each of them five shillings or so,[2] say gaily : ' Off with you now to Tivoli for three days and come back by Frascati.' While they were away he himself took over as much of their work as he possibly could, and in this way contrived without bothering anybody for substitutes to give every member of his community a holiday in the country before the summer was over.[3] One day he went out to Frascati himself to see how everybody was getting on, and as he trudged back, weary and dusty, to Rome, suddenly remembered that it was his turn to help the cook. He hurried on then and became dreadfully hot, but all the same went straight into the kitchen on his arrival. These are only little things, and yet they mean so much because learned books may soon be forgotten but the love and pity of a good man's heart are a dateless inspiration like Nazareth or Calvary.

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[1] *Summarium additionale*, num. 4, verses 5 and 19.

I often tell my heart that love can only be conquered by running away from it, and he who has not the wit to run away will surely perish by his own hand. . . . If the Salamander lives in the fire it is not a miracle of nature, but that icy you should find a place in my flaming heart, that indeed is a miracle, a miracle of love.

I often tell my heart that God can only be found by those who fly in search of Him, and a man who will not fly may rest assured that he will never find Him. . . . If the Salamander lives in the fire it is not a miracle of nature, but that Thou, great God, who art all a consuming flame, shouldst take up Thy abode in my icy heart, this indeed is a miracle, a miracle of love.

[2] ' Qualche giulii.' A giulio was worth about 1*s*. 8*d*. of our money.

[3] These details are from the evidence given in the Roman process by Joseph Finali, a lay-brother who knew Blessed Robert intimately. Cf. the *Informatio* published by the Congregation of Rites in 1749, Pars Secunda, p. 329.

Father Robert's love for his neighbour was strong as well as tender, and never took the easy course of letting faults go unchecked. He hated giving admonitions, but when he considered it necessary to pull anybody up nothing on earth could stop him. Yet even in this his gentleness found scope, and Fuligatti says that the reproof was invariably given 'con ogni maniera di soavità e compassione.'[1] According to the same writer, when, in his public exhortations, he had to call attention to faults against discipline in the house, the tears used to come into his eyes, 'and they, rather than hard words, were his arguments in favour of reform.' He would never order a penance before having thoroughly sifted the question, and when anybody lodged an accusation, the other party was always given the fullest opportunity to defend himself.[2] Father Robert was the most frank and candid soul in the world, and he did all in his power to make it easy for his subjects to be candid with him. There was nothing he hated more than diplomatic speeches or underhand dealing or, in fact, 'blarney' of any description. He liked a man to say out straight what he had in his mind, and his own habit of doing this was destined to get him into a good deal of trouble.

He had a horror, too, of anything which could foster dissension or party spirit. The Roman College must have been very much exposed to such evils, as nearly every nation under heaven was represented in it, and the Rector was correspondingly careful to avoid the smallest show of favouritism, or the least word that could be interpreted as a preference for any particular flag. His only favourites were the sick. For them nothing was too good, and he was quite shameless in the way he mothered them.[3] Cunning men that they were, they used to say to him, 'Father Rector, do give me your blessing' or 'Father Rector, please read me a little from the Gospel of St. Mark.' Then when they got up well next day and spread rumours that it was the Rector's prayers that were responsible, he was very astonished and troubled, and protested that he had never worked a miracle in his life. He used to admit that what he called 'mezzi miracoli', or half-miracles, had sometimes happened when he was about, but would point out triumphantly that he had employed relics of the saints on such occasions.[1]

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[1] *Vita*, p. 109.

[2] *L.c.*, p. 109.

[3] *L.c.*, p. 111.

4. It would be a great mistake to think that his years as Rector were a time of joyful freedom from theological and other worries. Never before or since has the Roman College attained such heights of scholastic glory as under his rule, and through his inspiring leadership. He had a very brilliant staff, perhaps the most brilliant that the College has ever known, and he considered no labour nor expense too great in seconding their efforts. The old library was in a dark and out-of-the-way corner, so he had a bright, new one built and splendidly equipped. Every branch of study was given its opportunity, and even mathematics, the Cinderella of most curriculums, found in him a fairy god-mother. In 1593 he issued a very special ordinance 'For the conservation and advancement of mathematical studies in the Society, to the greater glory of God our Lord.'[2] From November 3 of that same year to 18 January 1594, he was immersed in the work of the fifth general congregation of his Order. Writing to a friend in Louvain during this period, he said:

> I will make known your wishes to Father Baronius[3] as soon as I get an opportunity. At present I have scarcely time to breathe —*vix spatium respirandi habeo*—as I have to sit for several hours each day in our general congregation, and when I go home to our College I am overwhelmed with domestic business. In this College there are more than twenty professors, and about two thousand students, of which number two hundred are Jesuits.[4]

Both inside and outside his Order he had innumerable friends, for indeed to know him at all was to be numbered among them. The great Baronius and himself were already becoming like David and Jonathan to one another, and very sweet, too, is the story of his dealings with the happy saint, Father John Baptist Carminata, who was his provincial superior at this time. Between them there grew a tie closer than fraternal, so that they seemed at last to have but one heart and one soul. 'Vixerunt enim conjunctissime,' says the record, and to the end of their days, each made the other the sharer of his every secret, and hope, and sorrow.[5] Carminata, as will be seen, was only one of many close friends, for Bellarmine seemed to possess the divine quality of being able to lend his whole heart to each of a hundred borrowers. With him as its Rector, the Roman College inevitably became a haunt of all kinds of people, both great and lowly. In May 1593 he gave his brother Thomas the following item of news: 'On Sunday next, our very dear Cardinal Valier is coming to dine with us, having invited himself, just as Cardinal Perbenedetti did on Carnival Sunday.'[1] Cardinal Valier, according to the witness of his nephew, who was also in the purple, was so passionately devoted to Blessed Robert that he could hardly be kept away from him, and this nephew tells us, too, that crowds of other Cardinals and distinguished people used constantly to pay him visits.[2]

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[1] Fuligatti, *Tita*, p. 111.

[2] Le Bachelet, *Bellarmin avant son Cardinalat*, p. 332.

[3] The future great Oratorian Cardinal.

[4] Le Bachelet, *Bellarmin avant son Cardinalat*, p. 340.

[5] Aguilera, *Provinciae Siculae S.J., ortus*, etc. Palermo, 1736–1740, vol. II, p. 95.

Cepari, the biographer of St. Aloysius, also wrote a life of Bellarmine which has remained in manuscript, and in this he relates that gentlemen on tour from the north of Europe used to come to the door of the Roman College to see and speak with its Rector, bringing with them a public notary to give legal attestation of their visit! This certificate they would then carry home with them to brag about for the rest of their days. People do not go to all that trouble even over a private audience with the Pope, and we might well dismiss the story as mere gossip, had we not a most interesting piece of English evidence which shows at least that it was solidly founded. In 1617 a huge, posthumous volume of travels appeared in London with the title: *An Itinerary written by Fynes Moryson, Gent.; containing his ten yeeres Travell through Germany, Denmarke, Poland, Italy, etc.* Fynes Moryson was a student of Peter House, Cambridge, and in 1589, at the age of twenty-three, was appointed one of the travelling fellows. He then devoted two years to such studies as would qualify him the better for his tour, and left England in May 1591, having first deposited some hundreds of pounds with an insurance company. The terms which these companies offered afford telling evidence of the perils of travel in the sixteenth century, for *if* you came back alive, they were willing to give you a premium of 300 per cent., on condition that they kept the entire deposit if you did not. In 1594 the young and very stout-hearted Englishman reached Rome, giving himself out for a Catholic. There was no need for him to do that, as Rome did not object to the presence of Protestants provided they behaved themselves.[1] Before adopting the disguise he should have asked himself whether he would be able to live up to it, and then he would not have had to complain against the authorities for taking him for what he professed to be. The following is his delightfully written account of his adventures :

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[1] Le Bachelet, *Bellarmin avant son Cardinalat*, p. 334.

[2] The letter of Cardinal Pietro Valier (the nephew) is given in Bartoli's *Vita*, p. 537.

> I had purposed to see the famous Garden of the Cardinall of Ferraria at Tivoli . . . but Easter was now at hand and the Priests came to take our names in our lodging and when we demanded the cause they told us that it was to no other end but to know if any received not the Communion at that holy time, which when we heard, wee needed no spurres to make haste from Rome into the State of Florence. Onely I had an obstinate purpose to see Bellarmine. To which end, having first hired a horse and provided all things necessary for my journey to Sienna, and having sent away my consorts to stay for me with my horse and boots at an Inn in the Suburbs that I might more speedily escape if my purpose succeeded not : I boldly went to the Jesuites Colledge and Bellermine (*sic*) then walking in the fields I expected his returne at the gate, the students telling me that he would presently come backe ; which falling out as they said ; I followed him into the Colledge (being attired like an Italian and carefull not to use any strange gestures ; yea, forbearing to view the Colledge or to looke upon any man fully lest I should draw his eyes upon me). Thus I came into Bellermines chamber, that I might see this man so famous for his learning and so great a champion of the Popes : who seemed to me not above forty yeeres old,[2] being leane of body and something lowe of stature with a long visage, and a little sharpe bearde

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[1] The spirit of Papal Rome was not very different in 1685 from what it had been in 1594. In the former year, the city was visited by no less a person than the celebrated Bishop Gilbert Burnet, who afterwards became chaplain to William of Orange. In addition to writing the well-known *History of His Own Times*, this man also left behind a manuscript entitled *Travels through France, Italy, etc.* Speaking of his Roman experiences in it, he says : 'I confess the Minerva which is the Dominicans where the Inquisition sitteth is that which maketh the most sensible impression upon one that passeth at Rome for an Heretick ; though except one commit great follies he is in no danger there. . . . And I have more than ordinary reason to acknowledge this who having ventured to go thither after all the liberty I had taken in writing my thoughts freely both of the Church and See of Rome and was known by all with whom I conversed there ; yet met with the highest civilities possible among all sorts of people and in particular both among the English and Scottish Jesuits, though they knew well enough that I was no friend of their Order.'—*Travels through France, Italy, etc.* London, 1750, pp. 236–237.

[2] Father Robert was 52 at the time.

upon the chin of a browne colour, and a countenance not very grave and for his middle age wanting the authority of grey haires. Being come into his chamber and having made profession of my great respect to him, I told him that I was a Frenchman and came to Rome for performance of some religious vowes, and to see the monuments, especially those which were living and among them himselfe most especially, earnestly intreating to the end I might from his side returne better instructed into my country, that he would admit me at vacant houres to enjoy his grave conversation. He gently answering, and with gravity not so much swallowing the praises I gave him, as shewing that my company should be most pleasing to him, commanded his Novice, that he should presently bring me in, when I should come to visit him, and so after some speeches of curtesie, he dismissed me, who meant nothing lesse then to come againe to him.[1]

This then was the way in which Father Robert, of the 'not very grave' countenance, used to treat his casual visitors. Another Englishman testified on oath, in the process of beatification, that when his countrymen returned home after a visit to the Eternal City, the first inquiry their Protestant friends regularly made was 'Did you see Bellarmine and what is he like in appearance?'[2]

5. After his hasty departure from Rome in 1594, Fynes Moryson took the road to Naples, and swore heartily all the way along it. It was a terrible road, he says, infested with desperadoes, 'vulgarly called banditti,' and the only safe and permitted mode of travelling was in company with the postman who had a guard of Papal musketeers. The postman employed mules to carry the mail, and the mules, being mules, did all that in them lay to make everybody thoroughly exasperated and miserable. The passengers, continues Moryson, were obliged 'to rise before day and take horse, and so sitting all the day, yet not ride above twenty miles for the slow pace of the mules, and at noon they have no rest, only when they

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[1] *Itinerary*, Part 1, book II, pp. 141–142. Fynes also had an interview with Beza at Geneva, on which occasion an amusing incident took place. 'I walked with him to the church and giving attention to his speech, it happened that in the church porch, I touched the poor man's box with my fingers, and this reverend man soon perceived my error, who, having used in Italy to dip my fingers towards the holy water (according to the manner of the Papists, lest the omitting of so small a matter generally used, might make me suspected of my religion and bring me into dangers of great consequence), did now, in like sort, touch the poor man's box, mistaking it for the font of holy water. I say, he did soon perceive my error, and taking me by the hand, advised me hereafter to eschew these ill customs, which were so hardly forgotten.'

[2] *Summarium additionale*, num. 6, p. 49.

have the inn in sight, they are permitted to gallop before to eat a morsel or rather devour it, for as soon as the mules are past, they must to horse again every man, not only making haste for his own safety, but the soldiers forcing them to be gone, who are more slow than the rest.' Towards the close of the same year, 1594, Father Bellarmine, too, found himself unexpectedly in the Rome to Naples mule-express, as he had been appointed provincial superior of all the Neapolitan Jesuits. The following letter to his married brother Thomas shows what happened when the news of his appointment became known. It is dated Rome, 25 November 1594:

> I leave here to-morrow for Naples as superior of that Province. As soon as they discovered that I was going, many Cardinals, and particularly Santa Severina, Camerino, and some seven others, went to the Pope and told him that I was ordered off to Naples, and that this could not on any account be allowed. His Holiness showed himself displeased at my going, and sent Cardinal Gesualdi to make known his displeasure to Father General. As a result of this, the journey was postponed for the time being. Meanwhile, however, a Cardinal interceded with the Pope so successfully that he was able to tell Father General that his Holiness left the matter entirely to his discretion, and wished to put no further obstacle in the way. So Father General has kept to his original plan, because he really must have the disposal of his subjects.[1]

Bellarmine reached Naples on December 1, after being five wild, wintry days with the mules. He received a very hearty welcome from his new subjects, one of whom, a young scholastic named Antonio Beatillo, tells the following story of the occasion:

> All of us young people prepared a large number of prose and verse compositions on various matters, which we then attached to a wall in front of the refectory so that Father Provincial might see them and be pleased. Several of the pieces were in praise of himself, and I, in addition to other things, wrote a bit in Hebrew, which he took down and carried away to his room. A few days later he sent for me, and after embracing me praised my effort very warmly, for he was a great Hebrew scholar. When he noticed that I remained standing with my biretta off, as I did out of respect for my Provincial, he, too, rose and uncovered his head, nor would he sit down again and put on his biretta till I had done so. So then we both sat down together and put on our birettas.[2]

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[1] Bartoli, *Vita*, p. 168.

[2] *Summarium*, num. 22, § 12, pp. 49–50.

'All the time I have known him,' continues this pleasant Father Anthony, 'he was never a *huomo vagabondo* fond of wandering about, and he did not like even to go outside the College doors. He was always at work, either with his studies or over his business. On one occasion I saw him so ill at Naples that the doctors were in great anxiety, and yet to the wonder of all who visited him, he lay there in bed like a lamb, never uttering a single sigh or complaint.'[1]

Once again, as Provincial, we find him at his old work, washing dishes with the novices in the scullery.[2] Whenever business called him into the streets, he used to put the lay-brother who accompanied him on his right, as that was the position of honour. These nice distinctions mean nothing to us now, but they meant a great deal to sixteenth-century Italians, and anyone who met the pair and did not know Bellarmine would certainly have thought that the lay-brother was the person of most importance. One good Father protested strongly against this arrangement as derogatory to the position of a Provincial. 'Padre mio,' answered the Provincial sweetly, 'the good brother is known in this city and I am not, so it would be a shame to put myself before him.'[3] Indeed, it had become a second nature with Father Robert to look upon other men as his betters. At this time, Mutius Vitelleschi, the future General of the Society of Jesus, was Rector of the College in Naples and from him the new Provincial constantly sought advice. Bellarmine lived at the 'House of the Professed' which was some distance from the College, and whenever he wanted to consult the Rector used to tramp the intervening distance, no matter how bad the weather or how busy he might be. Vitelleschi begged him again and again to do the correct thing and send for him instead, but the selfless man could not be persuaded that there was anything more correct than to save one's neighbour as much inconvenience as possible, so he kept on coming in spite of all protests.[4] He hated nothing more than to be troublesome to anybody and made it a practice never to ask another to do for him what he could do for himself. One day, he stood by the door, booted and spurred for a journey, waiting for a companion who did not appear. He was in a great hurry, but rather than trouble a lay-brother he met with a request for help, he went all over the house himself in search of the defaulter. Fuligatti is careful to point out that this lay-brother suffered the pangs of remorse afterwards.[1]

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[1] *Summarium*, num. 17, § 12, p. 41.

[2] *L.c.*, num. 23, § 29, p. 51.

[3] *L.c.*, num. 22, § 13, p. 50.

[4] Fuligatti, *Vita*, pp. 116–117.

The records of the examinations in Blessed Robert's long process of beatification are full of similar little stories illustrating the self-effacement of his character. *Ama nesciri et pro nihilo reputari* was a maxim which he always hugged to his heart. The professor of moral theology in the Neapolitan province was then a certain Father Peter Persico. One day he received a visit from the Provincial who told him that a gentleman named Serra had asked his opinion on a disputed point of moral theology and that he had answered so and so. What did Father Peter think of his answer ? Father Peter, who was a blunt, straightforward soul such as Bellarmine loved, said at once : ' I totally disagree with your Reverence's solution. My opinion is the exact contrary.' Bellarmine thanked him and went away, and a short time afterwards Serra himself arrived. ' Immediately after seeing you the other day,' he said, greeting Persico, ' Father Bellarmine sent for me and suggested that as he had no particular competence in moral theology, I would be well advised to come and discuss the problem with you, and so here I am on his Reverence's recommendation.'[2]

Then there is the story of the erudite Spanish nobleman named Ferdinand Mendoza who wrote a book in those days, not so much of patristic as patriotic theology, his aim being to persuade Clement VIII to confirm the famous Council which was held at Elvira near Granada in the year 300.[3] He had a special copy of the work prepared as a present for Bellarmine, sumptuously bound in covers rich with gilding and arabesques. Inside, however, Father Robert found things less pleasant to his eye, as Mendoza had vigorously attacked the Controversies for giving the Council less honour than he considered its due. France, Italy, and the East could boast several General Councils, so why should anybody begrudge Spain a modest one of her own ? Yet Bellarmine not only denied that Elvira was œcumenical, but even tried to show that certain of its canons were tainted with the heresy of Novatian. Mendoza might have been defending the honour of his wife from the fervid way he talked, asking Bellarmine not to forget that there were such things as modesty and piety, and to remember that in ' despising, reprobating, and damning ' a canon of this Council, he was pitting himself single-handed against the best traditions of the Church.[1]

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[1] *Vita*, p. 114.

[2] *Summarium additionale*, num. 12, § 2, p. 105.

[3] On Mendoza and the Council, cf. Hefele-Leclerc, *Histoire des Conciles*, t. 1, p. 212.

Blessed Robert met the storm very quietly :

> Robert Bellarmine to Ferdinand Mendoza, salutation. Your book reached me only last week, and that is the reason why I have not thanked you sooner for so beautiful a gift. That you should wish to honour thus a man whom you have never seen, makes me more grateful to your kindness than I can well express. As I have discovered that you are displeased with what I have written about the Council of Elvira, I thought it would be well to tell you now the reasons that led me to my opinion, that you might understand how much I appreciate your kindness, and at the same time esteem and value your criticism.

A long, carefully-worded defence of his position follows, and then the letter concludes :

> Once again, my best thanks for your gift, and if ever you, in your turn, should require any service from me, be assured that I shall be only too delighted to render it. May God increase daily the great gifts with which He has already endowed your soul. Good-bye. Naples, 31 August 1595.[2]

6. Father Robert's rule was so gentle as scarcely to be felt, and we are told that all his orders ran in the subjunctive mood : ' Would you please do this for me,' or ' Would it be convenient for you to do that.' As of old, he was very much given to asking advice, for he had the meanest opinion of his own judgment. Aquaviva had even to admonish him for his excessive self-depreciation. ' I am informed,' he wrote, ' that your Reverence's great modesty makes you depend too much on your consultors. This is very well up to a point, but you must keep your liberty of deciding, and show that you, and nobody else, are the ruler.'[3]

In July 1596 the General had, for special reasons, transacted some business in connection with the Neapolitan Province without consulting the Provincial. Fearful lest Father Robert might think that he had done so from lack of confidence in his discretion, he wrote a most affectionate letter explaining the situation. ‘If I had been Provincial myself,’ he said, ‘I would have begun to suspect a General that acted so, but in truth I was driven to it entirely against my will.’

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[1] Cf. his second letter of 24 folio pages to Bellarmine, from which Le Bachelet gives extracts. *Bellarmin avant son Cardinalat*, pp. 365–368.

[2] Le Bachelet, *Bellarmin avant son Cardinalat*, pp. 354–358.

[3] Le Bachelet, *l.c.*, p. 353.

> Dear Father [answered Bellarmine], I am more sorry than I can say that you should have been worried with a rumour to the effect that I had begun to doubt your trust in me. I feel quite ashamed of myself that in the midst of such important business, and so many anxieties, you should have troubled to write a long letter in your own hand, solely to ease my mind. I will tell you honestly that before I became Rector of the Roman College, I did have doubts about your trust in me because of some complaints made to you by one who did not wish me well. All the same, I did not believe that you considered me too far gone in villainy, for you never showed me anything but kindness. Further, I may tell you that I was secretly delighted at the time, thinking that your want of confidence would relieve me for ever from the troubles of government, a position for which I have always thought myself singularly ill-fitted. But when you afterwards gave me care of the Roman College, and I considered what a great treasure you were thus confiding to me, to wit, the souls of so many of your sons, it became as clear as daylight that your distrust of me was entirely gone. Since then I have never doubted again, and with this confidence to support me, I have tried and will always try to serve you faithfully and zealously. . . .[1]

Good men always have enemies and Blessed Robert was no exception, we see. While in Naples, too, he suffered from an unkindly tongue, but afterwards when a Cardinal fate gave him his chance to be revenged. The man who had maligned him fell into disfavour with Pope Clement VIII, and was only re-established in his Holiness's good graces after Bellarmine had pleaded might and main on his behalf.[2]

At Naples as at Rome he did all he could to make the burden of common life sweet for his subjects, and as he believed that there was nothing like music ‘to banish grumbling, and other defects of recreation,’ promenade concerts were inaugurated here as well. He took an active part in them himself, though, as the chronicler says regretfully, ‘non aveva buona voce.’[3] His technical skill, however, enabled him to conceal its bad quality, and he compensated in another way by composing many pleasant little pieces for the Fathers and Brothers to sing. The sick were again his special care and some of them avowed in after years that they owed their very lives more to his thoughtful kindness than to the doctor's nostrums. 'Where another Provincial would have been content to console me and urge patience,' wrote one sufferer, 'this Provincial took time and trouble to find out the only remedy which could make me well.'

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[1] Le Bachelet, *Bellarmin avant son Cardinalat*, pp. 375–376.

[2] Evidence of Father Eudaemon-Joannes. *Summarium*, num. 29, § 20, p. 105. Cf. Aquaviva's letter, 3 March 1595, Le Bachelet, *l.c.*, p. 349.

[3] This same honest chronicler, Father Persino, tells us that on one occasion the Provincial disturbed a concert by singing abominably flat! *Quare abstenavit se, ut ita dicam, aliquo tempore a musica, ne, ut Scriptura ait, impediret musicam.*

He was sick himself, poor man, nearly always, but still fasted every Wednesday, Friday, and Saturday. On those days he came to table with the rest, and made a great show of eating as square a meal as anyone, but they watched him, and noticed that in spite of his vigorous use of knife and fork scarcely a morsel went into his mouth. Aquaviva was promptly informed of these ruses by several men who loved Father Robert too well to let him damage his health without protest. 'I hear from various sources,' wrote the General on 19 August 1595, 'that your Reverence's head and general health are suffering from your heavy work and your fasting. Do try to be more moderate in both the one and the other.'[1] A year later Aquaviva was obliged to return to the charge, and counsel the back-sliding Provincial to let himself be ruled by the doctors and not write so many letters with his own hand. This shows us Robert in trouble for being too hard on himself, but he was also reprimanded for treating others too grandly. On 2 September 1595 the General addressed him the following admonition:

> I have heard something which has astonished me greatly, knowing well as I do your Reverence's strict spirit of observance. This is that a big feast was held at the House of the Professed on the day of vows, a feast provided by a benefactor who spent a hundred ducats on it. Now that was far too much, and on other occasions I have forbidden the acceptance of delicacies and valuables from outside friends, as such things are not according to the spirit of religious poverty and frugality. I would like to hear something more from your Reverence about this matter, and I hope you will not let it happen again.[2]

One can sympathize with the General's anxiety on this occasion, but the culprit is not likely to receive too stern a judgment at modern hands. Anything that could afford his

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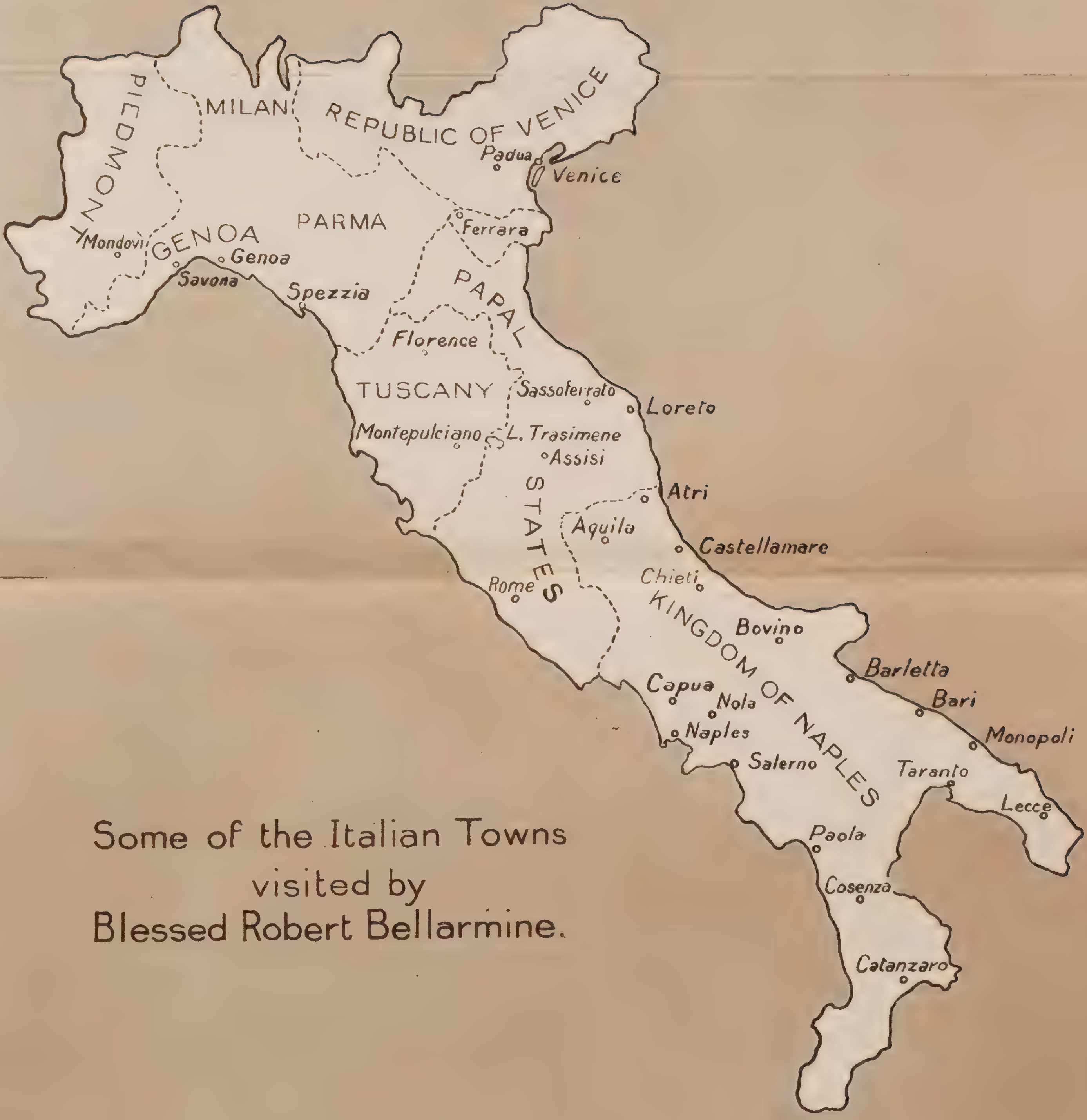
[1] Le Bachelet, *Bellarmin avant son Cardinalat*, p. 353.

[2] Le Bachelet, *l.c.*, p. 351.


PIEDMONT
Mondovi
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Padua
Venice
GENOA
Genoa
Savona
PARMA
Ferrara
Spezzia
PAPAL
Florence
TUSCANY
Sassoferrato
Loreto
Montepulciano
L. Trasimene
Assisi
STATES
Atri
Aquila
Castellamare
Rome
Chieti
KINGDOM OF NAPLES
Bovino
Barletta
Capua
Nola
Bari
Naples
Monopoli
Salerno
Taranto
Lecce
Paola
Cosenza
Catanzaro

Some of the Italian Towns
visited by
Blessed Robert Bellarmine.

subjects innocent relaxation had his sympathy, and a short time before the incident of the 'big feast,' we find Aquaviva admonishing him for granting permission too often and too readily for the acting of plays and other stage representations in the colleges. 'Do not let yourself be taken in by Rectors, as the Roman Provincial once was,' said the General. 'He thought that the proposed play would be a short, simple little piece, but it turned out that there were eighty actors in it.'[1]

7. During the two years he was Provincial, Father Robert made the tour of his big Province twice over, visiting in turn all the following towns: Aquila, Atri, Bari, Barletta, Bovino, Castellamare, Catanzaro, Chieti, Cosenza, Lecce, Monopoli, Nola, Paola, Salerno and Taranto.[2] The best way to understand what this meant in miles is to glance at a map. It has to be remembered that all the travelling was done on horseback, that the roads were not macadamized, to say the least about them, and that Calabria, the province of Cosenza and Catanzaro, was the native land of Europe's most picturesque and daring brigands. The townspeople of Taverna, in this perilous part of the world, once invited Father Robert to be their guest. On his approach, a body of men on horseback came to meet and escort him to the gates, where the magistrates were waiting with their welcome. Then he was taken to the town hall, the local artillery meantime booming a thunderous salute, and installed in a room which had been specially hung with tapestry in his honour. Afterwards there was a magnificent banquet at which his praises were sung and his health drunk with great enthusiasm.[3] Going on from there to Rossetto, a village on the Gulf of Taranto, he met with a very different reception and could not find a place to lay his head 'for love or money,' says Fuligatti, until some compassionate farmer allowed him to spend the night in a tumble-down cottage, half open to wind and rain, black with smoke, and possessing not a single article of furniture.

There was living in the Jesuit house at Lecce in those days, a very holy priest, since beatified, named Bernardino Realini. Bernardino had been a great man in the world, a doctor of Padua, and an intimate of the aristocracy, but he had given up all his prospects to become a Jesuit at the age of thirty-three. After taking his solemn vows in 1573 he had been sent to secluded and undistinguished Lecce, and there he remained for forty-two unbroken years, the most benign and best beloved counsellor the citizens possessed. When Bellarmine paid his first visit to the town, all the Fathers and Brothers came down to meet him and give him the customary kiss of peace. Jumping off his horse, he asked before embracing anybody : 'Which of you is Father Bernardino ?' As soon as Bernardino heard his name mentioned he hid himself behind the Rector, but he was soon discovered and pushed forward. The Provincial immediately fell on his knees before him, and then was enacted a scene as beautiful as the *Incontro* of St. Francis and St. Dominic.[1] Before his departure, Father Robert gave a public exhortation which Bernardino took down carefully, adding this postscript: 'To-morrow, Father Bellarmine, who delivered this exhortation, leaves us. He is truly a great saint and all will deeply regret his going.'[2]

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[1] Le Bachelet, *Bellarmin avant son Cardinalat*, p. 351.

[2] *Historia Societatis Jesu*, pars 5a, lib. xv, appendix *et passim*.

[3] *The Capua Process*, p. 75, and Fuligatti, *Vita*, p. 115.

It was at this time that Blessed Robert became involved in one of the most terrible struggles between a mother's heart and her son's conscience which the annals of religious life record. A very gifted boy named Julius Cæsar Recupito was then attending the Jesuit College at Naples. His mother, a lady of noble family, suddenly grew suspicious that he might want to join the Society of his masters. To rout any such idea out of his head, she took him away from the College and pitched him willy-nilly into the gay, dissipated social life of her own circle. Like others of the Neapolitan smart set, she went to Church during Lent to hear a sermon, bringing Julius with her, more as a prisoner than a companion. The boy noticed that the eloquent Jesuit in the pulpit had caught his mother's attention, so he slipped quietly from her side and went in search of Father Bellarmine to beg for admission into the novitiate. The Provincial consoled him and gave him fair hopes, which was all that he dared give under the circumstances, so next time Julius adopted more vigorous measures. After escaping from the Church as before, he ran as fast as his legs would carry him to the house where the Jesuit novices lived, and once inside, refused to budge for anybody. His mother stormed and wrote extremely violent letters to Aquaviva, who did his best to calm her by solemn assurances that the boy's vocation would be tested most carefully. The masterful Signora then procured an order from Rome for her son's transference to the palace of the Papal nuncio, and set every engine at work to shake his constancy. But tears and jeers alike were wasted on this lad of fourteen, who had as stout and resolute a heart as the first Julius Cæsar. His courage and patience won the nuncio to his side, and eventually another order came from Rome that he was to be taken back to the home of his choice.

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[1] *Summarium*, num. 22, § 10, p. 49.

[2] *L.c.*, num. 6, § 2, p. 5.

Six months later his grandfather fell ill. The poor mother at once seized the excuse to ask that her boy might come on a short visit home. He went in company with a priest, and having seen and said good-bye to the invalid was on his way back to the novitiate when he was ambushed in true Italian style by his mother and two of her minions. She rushed upon the astounded Father brandishing a stiletto, and so terrified him that he let the novice go. The burly minions immediately seized the boy, and having bound and gagged him bundled him into a waiting coach, and drove away to a castle in the hills. There he was bullied and beaten most cruelly, but meantime the Viceroy of Naples had been informed and armed soldiers were soon scouring the country in search of him. They found the castle at last, and after a brief siege compelled the terrible Signora to surrender her prey. The story looks as if it had been invented in Hollywood, but it is all quite true. As soon as Julius was released he rushed straight to the shelter of the novitiate, his religious habit all torn to rags by his infuriated mother.[1] No sooner was he back, however, than his own heart turned traitor to the cause. A fierce, passionate love and longing for her whom he had forsaken sprang up suddenly within him. Wherever he went, all day and all night, her face, agonized with grief, haunted him, and her words of sorrowful reproach rang tragically in his ears. Tortured beyond endurance, he fled to Father Bellarmine for consolation, knowing well that to be in trouble was to have that good man at one's feet. The Provincial let him pour out his story without interruption. Then rising he approached Julius, smiled gravely and made the sign of the cross on his forehead. 'Now,' he said, 'your troubles are over for good.' From that instant the boy was at peace, and never again during the fifty-two years of his life as a Jesuit was his vocation assailed.[2]

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[1] *Historia Societatis Jesu*, pars 5a, lib. xxv, n. 51, p. 904 (Poussines, Rome, 1661).

[2] Schinosi, *Istoria della C. de Giesù appartenente al Regno di Napoli*, Parte seconda, c. iii, p. 262; Bartoli, *Vita*, p. 171.

8. In the present chapter nothing has been written about the fresh impulse which Bellarmine gave to the studies of his Province by wise legislation, and still more by his infectious example, for he used to take part as defendant or objector in the scholastic disputations of the young men.[1] And nothing has been said either about the great church of Santa Trinità Maggiore in Naples, which his tireless energy hurried to completion and crowned with its beautiful dome.[2] It was well, for a little while, to see him apart from his theology and other official business, and we may fittingly conclude this account of his Provincialate with the notes of one of the last exhortations which he delivered before he returned to Rome. They are dated Nola 1596 and are on the text, *Fear not, little flock*, etc.[3]

Our Lord says three things: (1) He says that there are some people who are subject to grave fear; (2) He asserts that they ought not to be afraid; (3) He gives His reasons for this. As to the first point, those who are subject to fear are compared to a little flock, for a flock is a number of small animals, such as sheep and lambs, which are weak and defenceless and have many enemies. Moreover, it is called little to give greater grounds for fear, because great flocks are the property of rich men who have a number of dogs and armed keepers to defend them, but a little flock belongs usually to a poor man who has neither dogs nor keepers.

Now religious men are a little flock. By their vow of poverty they become poorer than anyone, because they are left with nothing whatever of their own, expect nothing, and can earn nothing; and so they are unable to put their trust in belongings, friends, talents, or skill, but must depend entirely on the mercy of others. By the vow of chastity they bind themselves against the allurements of the flesh, but their vow does not bind the devil not to tempt them, nor does it pluck out their eyes or render their imaginations powerless to think evil. And the world which they have renounced is always with them. Lastly, by the vow of obedience they make themselves slaves more to be pitied than any other bondsmen, because they oblige themselves to serve many different masters, and that for the whole time of their lives, without so much as an hour of freedom. Every moment they are dependent on the will of other men and must obey in all things where there is no sin, no matter how difficult and humiliating the command may be.

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[1] *Summarium*, num. 28, p. 86. Evidence of Cardinal Centino.

[2] Le Bachelet, *Bellarmin avant son Cardinalat*, pp. 381–382 and notes. The building of this church caused Bellarmine infinite worry and anxiety, the dome in particular being a problem. When the work was nearly finished some enemy cast a brand into it, and the fire which broke out severely damaged the interior.

[3] The original MS. is in the Stonyhurst College archives. It was given to the Procurator of the English Province in 1622 by Father Francis Rocca who had been Bellarmine's confessor for over twenty years.

Yet to such as these Our Lord says ' Fear not.' He does not say, ' Fear not this or that,' but ' Fear not ' absolutely and universally, for nothing can hurt you any more than if you were in Heaven itself, and out of the reach of all your enemies. Then He assigns the reason—' because it has pleased your Father to give you a kingdom.' For if God wishes to give to such as you a Kingdom, will He not also give food and clothing and protection from every enemy ? If a childless king were to adopt a poor boy as his son and heir, is there anything that the child would doubt of obtaining from his benefactor ? And notice carefully Our Lord's words, ' It has pleased your Father,' lest any one might say, ' Perhaps I shall be found unworthy.' For He did not build His kindness on the foreknowledge of your desert, but decreed it because it so pleased Him. And as one cannot enter His kingdom without merit, therefore has it pleased Him to make the merit yours by calling you to the religious life and inspiring you to take those vows which are a sign of predestination. Nor is it only His Heavenly Kingdom, in which is eternal life and every object of heart's desire, which He gives you. True religious also inherit a kingdom here below, for to serve God is to reign and all things serve him who serves God, working together for his good under all circumstances. If not a farthing could be taken from a man without a hundred pounds being given to him in exchange, if no disgrace could befall him without some dignity being straightway conferred, what would such a one have to fear ?

However someone may say : ' All this is very well but I have noticed the reverse. Many are the religious men who live wretched, downtrodden, afflicted lives, and know not where to turn for comfort.' My answer is that they are not true religious and do not put their whole trust in Christ, nor have they the high daring to throw themselves into His arms and renounce themselves in everything. But show me a man who has really given himself to God and left self behind, one, in a word, who is truly poor and chaste and obedient, and I will show you a man always cheerful and secure and the possessor of a kingdom in this world and the next. . . . Yes indeed, dear brothers, there is only one remedy for all our troubles, and that is trustfully to lay them upon God, and give ourselves with our whole strength to His divine service.

CHAPTER XV

THE SHADOW OF THE PURPLE

1. Pope Innocent IX, who wore the tiara for a bare two months in 1591, had been forty years earlier a bosom friend of Marcello Cervini, Robert Bellarmine's uncle. For this and other reasons, he decided, immediately after his election, to make the nephew a prince of the Church, disclosing his intention plainly to Bellarmine's warm admirer Cardinal Valier, and less explicitly to a Jesuit priest with whom he had long been on intimate terms. This Father was a man of merit and loved his Society very dearly, so when the Pope said to him one day, 'Your Order will shortly find a Cardinal in its ranks,' he was greatly perturbed, thinking that he himself must be meant. Otherwise, why did Innocent who was always so outspoken with him not mention any names? Thereupon the good man burst into tears and falling at the Pope's feet protested that he would not rise until his Holiness promised to spare the Society of Jesus so great a blow. Innocent was touched, and never guessing that the suppliant was pleading on his own behalf, gave his word that no Jesuit would be promoted in the consistory which was then imminent. When Father Robert was told this little story by Cardinal Valier, he showed unfeigned relief at his escape and blessed the innocence that had brought it about.[1]

In 1921, the third centenary of his death, a learned German scholar named Godfrey Buschbell delivered a lecture on 'The Characteristics of Cardinal Bellarmine' before the well-known Catholic literary association, the Görres-Gesellschaft. The gist of this lecture was to the effect that if Father Robert had ever called down a blessing on the man who was responsible for the postponement of his cardinalate, he had done so only as the rest of us 'bless' people who get in our way.[1] In other words, despite all pious pretences to the contrary, he was a very ambitious man, and pulled many unsanctified wires to obtain a red hat. Monsignor P. M. Baumgarten, another prominent scholar whom we have already seen in opposition over the Sixtine Vulgate, took up this matter of the cardinalate also. His book appeared as late as 1923, and in it he says that Bellarmine's ambition is 'so clearly evident from his own words that all the arguing in the world could not get over it. However sad this fact may be, it can never again reasonably be called in doubt.'[2] Only a month or two after this ringing verdict of her distinguished prelate had seen the light, the Catholic Church called it in doubt by beatifying Bellarmine. In the following pages any reader who cares will be able to study for himself every word of the evidence on which Baumgarten and Buschbell based their hostile conclusions. On 7 July 1572 the man whose credit they have striven so hard to shake, pronounced these words in the chapel of the Jesuit College, Louvain :

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[1] *Adumbrata Imago solidarum Virtutum Roberti Card. Bellarmini, a Marcello Cervino ejus Nepote exposita*, Siena, 1622, pp. 21–22. This Marcello was the grandson of Bellarmine's dearly loved uncle Alessandro Cervini. He became Bishop of Montepulciano in 1652. His book is too much of a mere pious eulogium to be of value except when he describes incidents such as the above, of which he may be supposed to have had first-hand knowledge. He was attached to Bellarmine's household for several years.

> I, Robert Bellarmine, promise Almighty God in the presence of His Virgin Mother and all the Heavenly Court . . . that I will never seek after nor be ambitious of any dignity or preferment inside or outside the Society and that should I be chosen for such, outside the Society, I will use every means in my power to escape the honour, unless I be obliged to the acceptance thereof by one who has the right to order me under pain of sin.[3]

Had he gone back on that solemn engagement as unashamedly as his detractors suggest, the task of the various 'devil's advocates' would have been easy. But they failed, and failed all along the line, because the character which they tore to pieces with such fine irony was not Bellarmine's character but a psychological abstraction created by their own imaginations. At the beginning of the last decade of the sixteenth century Cardinal Valier, a very old man of great holiness, was the most strenuous advocate of Father Robert's promotion. When Pope Innocent's death balked his half-won hope in 1591, he did not lose heart, but began all over again with Pope Clement. Rumour of these attempts had drifted to Montepulciano, much to the delight of Bellarmine's brother Thomas, who then represented the family. This good man was naturally very anxious that the attempts should succeed, and he appears to have bothered Robert not a little with his fears and expectations. In a letter of 14 May 1593 Robert tells him :

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[1] This lecture was published in *Abhandlungen der Herren Buschbell, Engert, Kalt, Kirsch, Mohler*, Cologne, 1921, pp. 3–15.

[2] *Neue Kunde von alten Bibeln, mit zahlreichen Beiträgen zur Kultur- und Literaturgeschichte Roms am Ausgange des Sechzehnten Jahrhunderts*, Krumbach (Bavaria), 1923, p. 184.

[3] *Summarium additionale*, num. 3, § 9, p. 23.

> Before leaving for his see of Verona, Cardinal Valier spoke to the Pope once again about that affair of mine. Afterwards I heard from him the same old story, namely that his Holiness had used more honourable terms about me than about Father Toledo. I do not want to deprive him of his fond and long-cherished hope, but all the same I consider it entirely vain.[1]

More than a year later, on 10 June 1594, Blessed Robert wrote again :

> I would like you to keep to yourself all knowledge of the matter mentioned in my letter. Silence is the proper course, especially as it may well be that nothing at all will come of it. It looks certainly as if it would be a drawn-out affair, and such being the case, death may easily intervene and spoil everything. The reason for the delay comes probably both from the Pope's deliberateness in action and from the strong opposition we here meet with, in some quarters.[2]

These two letters certainly do not prove that Robert Bellarmine was working to be made a Cardinal. All they show is that he dealt very gently with his brother's eager hope, which, being kind, he did not want to dash by immediate and open opposition to the project. That would come in its own good time when he had first, by slow degrees, accustomed his 'Molto magnifico Signor fratello' to the idea of failure. Thomas and he were the greatest of friends and shared plans together like two schoolboys. Neither of them enjoyed good health, and Robert's pleasantest letters have often a sudden little phrase about death which shows that it was never very far from his thoughts. On 2 June 1592, after the question of the cardinalate had first been broached, he wrote advising his brother to give up the office of Papal scribe which he held at the Vatican.

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[1] Le Bachelet, *Bellarmin avant son Cardinalat*, p. 334.

[2] Le Bachelet, *l.c.*, p. 343.

> If I were in your place [he said] I would bury myself in the country, and attend to myself and my family affairs. You have already served long enough with the Court. I would hate you to fall ill away from home, as you would assuredly suffer a great deal bodily and mentally at the hands of servants. Behold the pair of us now, both old men.[1] We cannot have much of this temporal life left to us, and so it would be a good thing if we both began to think seriously of the life which never ends. This you could do better at home than at Court. . . . If you have made up your mind to take a wife, I have no objection, especially if you can find some widow of respectable age from whom you might hope to have a son or two. However, I leave this matter entirely to your discretion.[2]

On the eve of his departure for Naples, 25 November 1594, he gave his brother the first clear hint of his real attitude in the matter of the cardinalate :

> The news of my possible promotion has reached the ears of some people who are able and willing to take all means to hinder it. But believe me, brother dear, far from being saddened that this should happen, I am delighted. For I see that Divine Providence is on my side, and will not suffer me to enter so dangerous a state.[3]

The next letter to Thomas which has been preserved, is dated December 1595, or more than a year later, but there is no reference whatever in it to the question which the two brothers are supposed to have been dreaming about day and night. Thomas is now addressed as 'Molto Illustre Signor Fratello,' because, says Father Robert, '*il molto Magnifico* has gone out of fashion.' Seven months afterwards, 5 July 1596, a Neapolitan Jesuit named Francis de Sangro addressed the following letter to Aquaviva :

> Very Reverend Father in Christ, A certain Mutius Ricerio of Camerino has written to our Rector in that town telling him that no sooner was Baronius made Cardinal [4] than he presented himself to the Cardinal of Camerino, Mgr. Perbenedetti, to complain that Father Bellarmine had been left out in the cold. Perbenedetti replied that those Fathers (meaning his opponents) had taken the hat off his head. Father Bellarmine is quite aware of all this, and Perbenedetti writes to say that he cannot put on paper all

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[1] Robert was fifty and Thomas fifty-two.

[2] Le Bachelet, *Bellarmin avant son Cardinalat*, pp. 321–322. Thomas did not favour the idea of a widow, and married a maiden who gave him not a son or two, but nine of them, as well as five daughters !

[3] Bartoli, *Vita*, p. 181.

[4] 3 June 1596.

that he could tell by word of mouth [about the intrigues]. When I discussed the matter with Father Bellarmine he edified me more than I can say, for he protested solemnly [*mi giurò*] that he never had had the smallest desire for such dignities, and if the thought of them ever so much as came into his mind, it was only that he might work out some plan to prevent his receiving them. He told me, too, that he was greatly pleased his promotion had been hindered. It saved him trouble, he said, because he would certainly have striven far harder than anyone else to hinder it [had that been necessary]. Only one thing might have made him a little sad, and that was if his promotion had been blocked by some sinister report or calumny against his character.[1]

Meanwhile brother Thomas in Montepulciano continued to build castles in the air and dream, perhaps, of another Pope in the family. In August 1596 the poor man was in great trouble for his baby daughter Cynthia had died, and his little son Robert, the first-born, was at death's door. The letter which reached him from Naples, dated 16 August 1596, spoke first to his sorrow, and then, taking advantage of the sober mood engendered by it, went on:

> You will remember my telling you that the affair [of the cardinalate] had reached the ears of people who were able and willing to hinder it. Well, now I feel sure that the matter is over and done with for good, and I am very grateful to the Providence of God which has delivered me from so heavy a burden, as It delivered me before, by another means, in the time of Pope Innocent. It is my hope that it will deliver me in all the years to come too. I want you then, dear brother, to conform your will with the holy will of God which always brings about what is best for us.[2]

2. Immediately after the receipt of this letter, the red hat in Thomas Bellarmine's vision of family glory changed into a mitre, as the Grand Duke of Tuscany, Ferdinand I, had just proposed Father Robert to the Pope for the vacant Bishopric of Montepulciano.[3] Thomas accordingly concentrated on the mitre which, though only a second-best, seemed the more attainable of his heart's desires. This time, however, his brother was obstinate from the start. On 4 September 1596, he addressed himself as follows to the Grand Duke:

> Most Noble Prince,—
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> I have learned that your Highness has deigned to remember my name in connection with the vacant See of Montepulciano.

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[1] Le Bachelet, *Bellarmin avant son Cardinalat*, pp. 373–374.
[2] Le Bachelet, *l.c.*, p. 378.
[3] The previous Bishop had died in Paris, 10 August 1596.

But even should it have pleased His Holiness to have chosen me for the pastoral care of this Church, nothing in the world would have persuaded me to accept the honour as I am most anxious to spend the little time of life that remains to me among my religious brethren. Nevertheless I am most obliged to your Highness for your good will in my regard, and I thank you very heartily. Both I myself and all my kinsmen will ever show ourselves eager in your service beyond the limits of our natural duty as your subjects. I kiss your Highness's hand with all reverence and pray God to grant you happiness in fullest measure.

Your most humble and obliged servant,
ROBERT BELLARMINE.[1]

As the Duke was then at his country-house of Cafaggiolo, in the Apennines, this letter took some time to reach him. His reply is dated 19 October 1596.

MY VERY REVEREND AND MOST BELOVED FATHER,—

In proposing and recommending you to his Holiness for the Bishopric of Montepulciano I acted entirely on my own responsibility, and I must confess that I was not thinking of doing you a favour or pleasing you in any way, though your goodness, learning, and worth richly deserve such consideration. No, my only thought was to provide the best possible shepherd for those people, in the interests of their eternal salvation. So you owe me no thanks at all. Indeed it is I who am indebted to you for your affectionate offers of service, and though I desired most ardently to see you at the head of the Church in your own native town, I cannot withhold my admiration for your resolve to refuse all episcopal dignities in order that you may remain a simple religious. May God ever increase His holy grace in your soul.[2]

Meantime Thomas Bellarmine seems to have been using all the influence he possessed to obtain the bishopric for his brother, and to calm his importunity Father Robert decided to speak to him 'like a man o' this world.'

People who are well informed about such matters [he wrote, 4 October 1596] have come to the conclusion that the Holy Father was thinking rather of slighting than honouring me by the proposed elevation [to the See of Montepulciano], especially as he has in recent times elevated Father Toledo to the purple, and conferred the same honour just lately on Baronius. Had the dignity in question been a far greater one, still nothing in the world would have persuaded me to accept it. Believe me, dear brother, the

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[1] Le Bachelet, *Bellarmin avant son Cardinalat*, pp. 378–379.
[2] Le Bachelet, *l.c.*, pp. 380–381.

> older I get, the more convinced I become that Divine Providence wants me to work out my salvation in the way of holy humility.[1]

Buschbell, Baumgarten, and other doctors of the Döllinger school,[2] have found this letter much to their liking, but an unbiased reader, who takes the circumstances into account, will see in it nothing but an innocent *argumentum ad hominem.* Thomas Bellarmine persisted in urging acceptance of the bishopric, because a mitre would bring worldly distinction to his house. Very good, says his brother ; I will give him a worldly estimate of what the distinction is worth. But he does not in the least suggest that he made that estimate his own, or considered that the promotion would really have been a slight.

His last letter to Thomas from Naples was dispatched on 26 November 1596. In the course of it he says :

> That affair of ours [the cardinalate] is again being discussed a good deal, and some people think that it will probably go through this time, especially as the only obstacle in the way has been removed by death.[3] Still, as I have said several times before, I think I am safe, and that nothing at all will happen. My reason for so thinking is because Divine Providence has already twice hindered the matter, and does not lack means to hinder it always. Whatever pleases God is, beyond the shadow of doubt, best and most profitable for us all, especially as I am already an old man and perhaps near to death. Consequently I am very anxious, dear brother, that you should put the matter out of your head altogether.[4]

3. Before the end of 1596 Father Robert was back in Rome, having been summoned by Aquaviva at the command of the Pope, the intention being that he should more or less fill the post of Papal theologian left vacant by the death of Cardinal Toledo. Clement's esteem for Bellarmine's judgment was shown, about this time, in a peculiar way. The Holy Father had a great liking for Plato, and toyed with the idea of founding a chair of Platonic philosophy at the University of the Sapienza.

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[1] Le Bachelet, *Bellarmin avant son Cardinalat*, pp. 379–380.

[2] Mgr. Baumgarten was a pupil of Dr. Döllinger, and Döllinger, as we have seen, regarded Bellarmine almost as a personal enemy.

[3] This is what 'alcuni tengono.' The obstacle was Cardinal Toledo who died on 14 September 1596, and the reason why he was an obstacle was that Clement VIII did not care to have two Jesuit Cardinals in his court at the same time. The reason why Clement did not care was that people would say things, and the reason why people would say things was that they were human, and there we may stop.

[4] Le Bachelet, *Bellarmin avant son Cardinalat*, p. 383.

Before taking any steps, he asked his Jesuit adviser what he thought about the scheme. Father Robert was very frank with him, and instanced Origen as an example of what might be expected from too great devotion to the founder of the Academy. The lure of Plato's thought and style, he said, was far greater than any spell Aristotle knew how to cast, and the very fact that there was so much truth and beauty in his Dialogues made their errors the more subtly dangerous. The Pope had to admit the justice of these objections, and no more was heard of the proposed lectureship.[1]

After his return, Father Robert began quite a large correspondence with his relatives in Montepulciano and other friends, from which we learn some interesting details. Witches and wizards, for instance, intrude into his story at this point:

> To Thomas Bellarmine, 31 January 1597. As I was about to leave Naples I received your letter telling me of the death of your boy Vincent. I consoled myself with the thought that the little man's [2] unstained innocence was so soon found worthy to receive its eternal crown, but my consolation was turned to sorrow when I learned that our native country harboured people wicked and jealous enough to employ spells and charms for the destruction of families. However, there is a God above us, and He does not permit these evils except for some good purpose. So we ought to say with holy Job: The Lord hath given, the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord.
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> You will already have heard of the delight with which my good friends among the cardinals welcomed me back to Rome. But though there is much talk, and some people consider that I am destined for great things, I feel myself utterly disinclined to any change, and I trust that God, who has twice prevented it already, will prevent it for good, so that I may be able to work my way to Heaven without hindrance.[3]

The Cardinals had good reason to be delighted with his return. When he left for Naples in 1594 one of the most eminent of them wrote: 'I can never be happy at Rome without your Reverence whom I love so dearly, and from whose conversation my old age has learned so much. Several Cardinals retain a most grateful recollection of you, and miss you sorely because of the light which your judgment and learning used to afford us.'[4] Now that he was back, Pope Clement decided that he must come and live at the Vatican so as to be near his work. The thought of having to pass his days amidst the pomp and circumstance of court life worried him greatly. Luckily, however, his brother Jesuits were in charge of the polyglot confessionals of St. Peter's and had a house, known as the Penitenzieria, quite close to the Basilica. Father Robert made up his mind that that was the place for him, and by dint of earnest pleading he succeeded in winning round Cardinal Aldobrandini, the Pope's nephew and first minister, to his view. In a letter to his brother of 27 February 1597 he says with a highly satisfied air: 'Should anyone ask you where I am living, tell them I am at the Penitenzieria of St. Peter's, which belongs to our Society.' Then having explained how he had escaped residence at the Vatican, he turns his attention to the wizards who were troubling Montepulciano. He himself had had experience of their tricks, as he explained in a letter from Naples, in 1595, to Mgr. Danesi of the first named city, who was working at Rome for the solemn beatification of their holy compatriot, the medieval Dominican nun, Agnes:

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[1] Fuligatti, *Vita*, p. 119.

[2] Vincent was only five.

[3] Le Bachelet, *Bellarmin avant son Cardinalat*, pp. 385–386.

[4] *Summarium*, num. 28, § 5, p. 89. Testimonio del Signor Cardinale Valier.

> When I was a boy I witnessed a very wonderful incident which took place in our city. One day during Lent a very holy Dominican Father was to preach in the Cathedral, but no sooner had he mounted the pulpit than certain wicked men caused him straightway to lose his voice by casting magical spells upon him. The Father at length made a vow to Blessed Agnes, whereupon the incantations were discovered, and his voice restored. I myself saw him twice in the pulpit unable to pronounce a single word, and shortly afterwards heard him preach the praises of the same holy Virgin in clear and powerful accents. This was in the Church of Blessed Agnes, where, at the same time, he related the miracle and performed his vow.[1]

The abstract possibility of a pact with the devil, on which the whole theory of witchcraft depended, was borne out by the Scriptures and the writings of the Fathers. With this clue for a start, the imagination of pre-scientific Europe had run riot and found the explanation of nearly all mysterious, malevolent happenings, in the cottages of unfortunate old women or the attics of eccentric greybeards who had taken up some queer hobby or other to brighten their loneliness. In Bellarmine's day nearly everybody believed in the reality of witchcraft.[1] The famous political theorist, Bodin, wrote a book to prove its genuineness in 1580, and when an enlightened Englishman named Scott answered him, James I ordered the answer to be burned as an impious and dangerous attack on Christianity. The responsibility for the witch mania of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries rests as much, if not more, with the Reformers as with the Catholic authorities.[2] But that is not a matter for excessive rejoicing. Perhaps the worst and widest influence in the whole sad story was exerted by an unfortunate book published at Cologne in 1487, with the title, *Malleus Maleficarum*, or the Hammer of Witches. It had for authors two German Catholic priests, and these gentlemen were such expert investigators that they were able to warn Europe of the times and seasons when danger from witches and wizards was particularly to be expected. The hour of childbirth seems to have been a specially busy time for those foes of society.[3]

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[1] Lorenzo Sordini Mariani, *Vita di S. Agnesa Virgine di Montepulciano.* Firenze, 1606, p. 81. The author of this life relates the strenuous efforts which Bellarmine made to procure the solemn ratification of the cultus of St. Agnes. It was he, too, who prepared the Breviary Lessons for her Feast.

Among the many gentle spirits who were affected by the book was Robert Bellarmine, but though apparently convinced that witchcraft was real and prevalent, he did not allow his belief to interfere with his sense of justice. Continuing the letter to his brother Thomas he said :

> When you have discovered the identity of the wizards and are able to prove that they are such, you will render God a service by denouncing them to the Holy Office, which will not fail to do its duty. However, you must take great care lest your sorrow [for the death of your child] should lead you to make unfounded accusations. I do not know what else I can say to you about the matter. I have not spoken to Father Clavius as he left Germany when quite young and knows nothing about charms and spells. I myself have studied the *Malleus Maleficarum* and the book of Sylvester Mazolini, *De Strigibus*,[4] and I lectured on these questions when I

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[1] For Italy, cf. Cantu, *Gli Eretici d'Italia*, vol. II, pp. 365–402.

[2] Cf. Janssen, *History of the German People*. Eng. tr., vol. XVI, cc. iv and v.

[3] At a later date, another German Catholic priest, the Jesuit Friedrich von Spee, made noble atonement in his famous *Cautio criminalis* (1631). The unceasing campaign which he carried on against the craze was largely responsible for its eventual disappearance in Germany. Cf. the essay on him in Father H. D. Ryder's *Collected Papers*.

[4] 'Concerning Wizards.'

was a professor of theology.[1] The remedies both preventive and restorative are briefly, first and foremost, firm faith in God and the most holy sign of the cross. Many examples might be given in proof of the efficacy of these remedies. 2°, Confession and Communion on the part of the father and mother. 3°, Objects blessed by the Church such as Agnus Dei, holy water, palms, etc. I once possessed a little piece of the wood of the true Cross and several other fine relics, but I gave them all to one of our Fathers who was going to the Indies. I will see whether I can find something for you and send it on, but I would like very much to know when the baby is expected so that the relic may arrive in time.[2]

4. While the wizards were worrying Thomas Bellarmine, another of Father Robert's relatives, Mgr. Herennius Cervini, had brought himself into trouble of a different kind and also appealed to the family counsellor for help. Mgr. Cervini was a distinguished ecclesiastic who, in addition to holding the benefice of an abbey near Sassoferrato, was overlord of the estate of Vivo. In this territory there prowled a brigand named Matthei. Herennius, without any thought of consequences, had the man arrested and handed over to the secular arm, which promptly condemned him to death. Then complications began, for to be the cause of anybody's death is to incur irregularity in canon law, and irregularity may mean the loss of benefices. A big scruple arose in Cervini's mind on the point, and to lay it, he had recourse to the wisdom of his holy and most obliging cousin. Father Robert sided with the scruple. Nothing could be done, he said, except to obtain absolution and dispensation from the Holy See, a matter which looks quite simple, but which really requires all manner of tiresome formalities. He undertook the whole process himself, though he was very busy with other work, and only asked Herennius to send him the name of the malefactor, as that had to be entered in the documents. Owing to miscarriage of letters it did not reach him for more than three weeks. As he had filed his petition immediately, the Roman lawyers began to demand what he was about. Did he want the dispensation or did he not? 'If this is Monsignor's way of doing business,' he told his brother Thomas at the end of March 1597, 'I do not think I shall be in such

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[1] The MS. of Father Robert's Louvain lectures contains a *Disputatio de Magia*, the fifth chapter of which is entitled 'Remedies against magical arts'.

[2] Le Bachelet, *Bellarmin avant son Cardinalat*, p. 387.

a hurry over his affairs in future.' [1] Not till December of the same year were the troublesome negotiations over. On the fifth of the month he wrote to Herennius : ' Your petition has been signed by the Pope, and at the moment a brief is being made out which I shall forward to you next week, if the Holy Father's indisposition does not render it impossible for him to put his signature to the document.' On receipt of this letter Cervini wrote back telling of a wonderful cure for the gout which he had discovered and which might benefit the Pope.

> I went to his Holiness myself [answered Father Robert], and read him the relevant portion of your letter, adding that you were highly qualified in such matters, that your prescription was worthy of all confidence, and that you had no other desire but that his Holiness should enjoy health unto a ripe old age. He heard me very willingly and asked me if I would mind him mentioning the question to his doctor Provenzano, who is a particular friend of my own. I replied that he might certainly do so, but that I did not want your name made known to anybody except himself, in case the doctor might disapprove of the remedy. This official was then summoned, and once again I read over parts of your letter in his presence. He said that it was a good remedy for the gout, but that the use of it was dangerous because in curing the gout it might cause a flux of humours to the vital parts and so occasion death. I replied that according to your Lordship's letter this medicine not only cured the gout, but strengthened the stomach and the head, and arrested the fluxes which are as it were the source of the disease. At length all agreed that the remedy should first be tried on some person here in Rome, and if it succeeded, that the Holy Father might have a dose, should he feel so inclined. In conclusion, his Holiness bade me write to you in his name that you should come to Rome as soon as possible, if you can do so without inconvenience. Otherwise, would you please send on some of those pills with brief directions how they ought to be taken. I told him that your Lordship would willingly suffer any inconvenience in order to be of service to him, but he insisted that I must put the disjunctive in my letter, and leave it to you to decide whether to come yourself or to send the pills. This is the state of affairs. It remains for you now to turn it to good account, and the sooner the better.[2]

Those letters are very instructive as showing how Father Robert interpreted the obligations of friendship. The eager way in which he seized on the pills as a method of bringing back his 'irregular' cousin into Court favour also illustrates the Franciscan *semplicità* of his character. Another letter, written 28 March 1597 to a Jesuit who had asked him to hunt up some old manuscripts in the Vatican Library, runs thus:

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[1] Le Bachelet, *Bellarmin avant son Cardinalat*, pp. 388–390.
[2] Le Bachelet, *l.c.*, p. 403.

> Dear Father in Christ, My delay in answering you was due to the fact that I could not find anyone to enlighten me on the matter of your request. Cardinal Colonna, senior, the Librarian, is constantly unwell and knows nothing about the Library. That was my chief difficulty, so at last I began investigations on my own account, and by means of the catalogues discovered twelve sermons of St. Gregory of Nyssa, partly included in others of his works, and partly in the works of St. Basil. In case you might wish to have them examined, the references are numbers 291 and 304 in the Greek section. As for the Breviary Lessons of St. Romuald, it is not generally considered that they are so faulty as to need correction, especially since they have been already revised by Father Bencio of happy memory, whose linguistic ability was not unknown to your Reverence. Nevertheless, as the Holy Father has given Cardinal Baronius and myself reason to hope that he will go on with the work of correcting the Breviary, if your Reverence has any particular criticism or objection to urge about those lessons of St. Romuald you might let me know and it will receive mature consideration. I am here to be of service to your Reverence, and other friends, in whatever way you may wish to use me. I have to confine myself to my own department, of course, and this is not so extensive as was Cardinal Toledo's, though people say that I am his successor. Please give my affectionate good wishes to Father Superior and all the community. . . . As for news, some people say that five or six red hats are certain to be disposed of at Pentecost, but I am of Aristotle's opinion that *de futuris contigentibus non est determinata veritas.* Pray for me, Father.[1]

5. Very soon after Bellarmine's return to Rome the question of the cardinalate again came to the front, and with it a revival of hopes in Montepulciano. On 7 April 1597 he wrote to questioning, dreaming, doubting Thomas:

> I have made up my mind, and if the matter rests with me I will not change my state. My reasons for this decision are: 1°, it would not be good for my soul and this to me, at least, is quite evident; 2°, it would not be good for my bodily health, because at my age and after so many years of religious life I have lost zest for temporal concerns and take pleasure only in study and quiet avocations; 3°, it is not necessary in the family interests, because

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[1] Le Bachelet, *Bellarmin avant son Cardinalat*, pp. 391–392.

even though you should have more children, I shall be dead before they reach an age when I could be of any advantage to them. Your baby daughter is not likely to reach woman's estate in my lifetime, as there can hardly be much of it left to run; 4°, the change would cause sorrow to my Order in every part of the world, whereas if I escape promotion the relief will be equally universal; 5°, I could not do the Church any greater service in another state than I can render in my present one; 6°, the change would give the enemies of the Faith occasion to blaspheme worse than ever, for they would say that I had written my books solely with a view to ecclesiastical preferment.[1]

In spite of all these good reasons against it, Thomas Bellarmine did not surrender his hope, and went on making anxious inquiries. On April 25 his brother answered laconically: 'Ask Mgr. Danesi, for he knows more than I do. My Lords, the Cardinals, and especially my most intimate friend Baronius [2] tell me nothing, because they know well what I think about the matter. Pray for me that God's will may be done and that I may save my soul.' [3] A month later, May 31, he wrote again:

> I remember having told you three years ago that prolonged negotiations might easily come to nothing. That is exactly what has happened, and I am still of the same opinion. It is well for us then to keep our wills conformed to God's will in everything, especially as we are both of us ancients, and so, near our graves.[4]

The next letter, of June 14, is a very interesting one addressed from the Roman College:

> It is a week now, I think, since I came back to the College in order to be near the Court, which is at present at the Quirinal Palace on Monte Cavallo. I might have lodged at our Novitiate of S. Andrea which is also on Monte Cavallo, but the College is more convenient because here I have access to books, and opportunities for converse and discussion. In October I return to the Penitenzieria, if I am still alive and nothing has meanwhile happened to prevent me. If Captain Mario [5] wants to make out that he is not an ancient, I leave it to him. As for myself, I have had to wear spectacles for the last two years and the hearing of my left ear is almost completely gone. With the right one I can hear well enough if people speak up. Cardinal Madruzzo always talks

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[1] Le Bachelet, *Bellarmin avant son Cardinalat*, p. 393.

[2] 'A chi sono intrinsichissimo.'

[3] Le Bachelet, *Bellarmin avant son Cardinalat*, p. 394.

[4] Le Bachelet, *l.c.*, p. 396.

[5] A relative of Bellarmine's who had been named praetor of Bologna 48 years earlier. Merkle, *Concilium Tridentinum*, vol. 1, Diariorum, p. 850.

in a low voice and this makes it very difficult for me to carry on business with him.[1] The Pope himself has often to repeat what he has said to me, noticing that I have not understood him. Once upon a time I used to be able to visit the seven churches on foot, but now I can scarcely trust myself to do half as much. Unlike my old self I eat very little because my stomach cannot support it. All this seems to me to tell of old age. Moreover, my hair has turned completely white. If Mario had been through what I have been through, and if he had to deliver a Latin address every Thursday, before the Pope, on some thorny problem, perhaps he would have more grey hairs than he now appears to possess. It seems to me that this deafness of mine is a sign that I take after my mother's side of the family rather than my father's, and you know what short lives our mother and her brothers and sisters had, with the solitary exception of our aunt Elizabeth. I say this not from any wish for length of days, because, in truth, I would much prefer to escape as soon as possible from the perils which endanger the salvation of my soul, but rather that you may consider how little store we ought to set by titles and dignities, even should we chance to obtain them. . . .[2]

A few weeks later, August 8, Father Robert considered that it was about time he was allowed a turn as interrogator. 'If you do not think it too curious of me,' he wrote to Thomas, 'I would be glad if you would see in our father's family register whether I was born in the morning or the evening. I have had several arguments with Mgr. Tarugi on this point, he saying that his brother Jerome was born on the morning of St. Francis's feast and myself in the evening, whereas it seems to me that it was the other way about. Perhaps he was right, though, as his brother has died first and that may be a proof that he was my elder. If you cannot find the book, please do not trouble further as the matter is not so very important.'[3]

6. The reason why Bellarmine was so anxious to have access to books while the Papal Court resided at the Quirinal was because Clement VIII had given him an express order to write a treatise on indulgences. Curiously enough, though this subject had formed the original war-cry of the Reformation, there was nothing about it in the early editions of the Controversies. The omission, it need hardly be said, was not due to apathy or unwillingness to grapple with a difficult

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[1] He was a member of the Congregation of the Holy Office, to which Bellarmine was consulting theologian.

[2] Le Bachelet, *Bellarmin avant son Cardinalat*, pp. 397–398.

[3] Le Bachelet, *l.c.*, p. 399.

problem, for such problems were Father Robert's daily bread. In his preface to the treatise he tells us why it had not been included in his second volume, to which it rightly belonged :

> That which was the first of all the controversies of our age has had to be dealt with last of all in our pages, not by choice but by chance. I had originally marked out a place for this controversy after the books on penance. Those books happened to be ready for the press about the time of the autumn recess, and as the printer was in a hurry to get the second volume off his hands, I had no opportunity of finishing the treatise, though I was most anxious to have it included. Afterwards I was overwhelmed with business of all kinds, both public and private, and could scarce steal a few months' leisure in which to bring the third volume to an end. This present year, however,[1] I found myself unexpectedly with some free time at my disposal, and the Holy Year of Jubilee and solemn indulgences being imminent, I could no longer defer paying a debt which many men justly demanded of me.
>
> Although I have chiefly in view the exposition of the controversy on indulgences as it is carried on between Catholics and heretics, still I shall not forget those points which, not being of faith, are freely discussed amongst Catholics themselves, in the search after truth. The following will be the order of the whole disputation: I shall first say something about the names Indulgence and Jubilee, and at the same time give a list of those who have written in defence of indulgences or against them. The next step in the argument will be an inquiry whether indulgences exist, and here two matters have to be discussed, namely the spiritual treasury of the Church, and the power of distributing what is contained in that treasury. Thirdly, we shall investigate the precise nature of an indulgence, and here, also, two points have to be explored, to wit, whether an indulgence be simply the payment of a debt or rather a judicial absolution, and if so from what bond the release or acquittal is given. Fourthly, we shall treat of the many forms and varieties of indulgences, and fifthly, of their utility and fruit. In the sixth place, we shall inquire who can grant them, and for what reasons. Then, seventhly, we shall see by whom and under what conditions they may be gained, and finally, whether and how they can be applied for the benefit of the dead. That will end the first book. In the second, I shall expound, discuss, and refute the contrary arguments of Luther, Calvin, Heshusius, and Chemnitz, who are our chief opponents in this matter, and also lay bare their lies, frauds, and impostures.[2]

The treatise runs in its entirety to about 55,000 words. In a confidential letter to his friend Father John Baptist

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[1] 1597.

[2] *Opera omnia*, Fèvre's ed., Paris, 1873, t. VII, pp. 13–14.

Carminata, its author afterwards gave some explanations which illustrate his own attitude and practice where indulgences were concerned. Father Carminata had begged him to obtain from the Pope an indulgence of a hundred years for a new chapel which he had built.

> Before speaking to his Holiness [answered Bellarmine] I would like to know whether the indulgence you ask for is intended for the living or the dead. I ought to tell you that in spite of numerous requests for indulgences of as great or greater value, the Congregation does not grant such, and readily reduces them from a hundred years to a hundred days. This is because such indulgences are a novelty, and might even be considered as one of the abuses which the Council of Trent ordered to be reformed according to the ancient practice of the Church. It was the custom formerly to grant only very small indulgences. Pope Innocent III said that the Holy See did not usually grant an indulgence of more than a year and forty days, and blamed the concession of great and disproportionate ones. St. Peter Damian relates that, in his times (c. 1060), the Roman Church granted pilgrims from beyond the seas who made a visit to the tomb of the Apostles, an indulgence of three years, to pilgrims from beyond the Alps, an indulgence of one year, and to pilgrims from Italy, an indulgence of forty days.
>
> One reason for conceding only indulgences of small value is that a serious motive is required for their concession at all. Otherwise the discipline of the Church would suffer. Indeed, the grant of a large indulgence for some insignificant act is probably invalid. Consider, I pray you, whether there be any proportion between these two things: attendance at a single Mass and deliverance from a hundred years of the most rigorous chastisement which the justice of God can inflict.
>
> As to the privileged altar, I may tell you that the Pope commissioned two other Cardinals and myself to examine the foundation on which the concession of such altars rests. Our answer was that there were no very solid grounds for the custom and that it was not known up to the time of Gregory XIII, who filled the world with these altars. Sixtus V had thought of suppressing them, but refrained for fear of scandalizing the faithful. Moved by such considerations, the present Pope has decided to grant the privilege in future only under many restrictions and for a limited time, so that simple Catholics may not get the false notion into their heads that a Mass celebrated at a privileged altar infallibly delivers a soul from Purgatory.
>
> Having explained myself quite frankly, I would ask you to let me know, once again, the precise form in which I should present your petition. Take my advice and be very moderate in your request. The smaller an indulgence is, the surer are we of obtaining

its fruit. If the concession of indulgences rested with me, none would be granted except little ones, according to the practice of Pope Pius V.[1]

Fuligatti records that Blessed Robert liked to gain his indulgences 'con fatica,' because 'it appeared to him that the conditions usually imposed were too easy. He used often to say that since indulgences cost Our Lord His precious blood they ought only to be begged for with reluctance and in pressing need.'[2]

7. The Rector of the Roman College when Bellarmine went there to write his treatise was a very saintly man named Peter Spinelli, son of the Duke of Seminaria. It might have been expected that the visitor would receive a privileged welcome, for besides having been Rector and Provincial in his Order, he was rightly considered by everyone to be one of the most distinguished men of his age. It was the very opposite that happened, however, as his friend Eudaemon-Joannes relates:

> He was given a tiny little room—*una cameretta molto piccola*—right in front of the house lavatories. These lavatories had afterwards to be abolished because the stink (*sic*) from them rendered the corridor practically uninhabitable. I visited him several times in his little room and never do I remember to have seen two or three books in it at once. He was writing then, if I am not mistaken, a treatise on indulgences by order of the Pope, and used to go to the library whenever he wanted to consult any particular volume. The library was such a very cold and comfortless place that hardly anyone put a foot inside it during the winter, yet I remember seeing him come from it many a bitter night of that season. Nor am I aware that a word of complaint, either at the inconvenience of his room or the want of books, ever fell from his lips. He told me afterwards, laughing merrily, that the Pope had asked him whether

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[1] This rare letter was published in *Il Neosofo*, a work by J. C. Scarpo, which appeared at Venice in 1740. Döllinger and Reusch re-issued it in their edition of Bellarmine's Autobiography (pp. 135–136) and endeavoured to show that its statements were in contradiction to the teaching of the Treatise on Indulgences. In this they were decidedly unfair, for Bellarmine in the Treatise expounded, according to his promise, all the opinions of Catholic doctors on the matter in question. In the letter he is concerned with one opinion only which seemed to him the more probable, but he does not claim that it is of faith or that the others are in any way heretical. Couderc has some good remarks on the point. Vol. 1, pp. 246–247.

[2] *Vita*, p. 196. Couderc's translation of this passage which runs, *per questa cagione con molta renitenza, e sforzato da gran causa, richiedeva*, is amusingly toned down: 'il est juste que nous fassions quelque effort généreux pour les gagner'!

he was satisfied with the *apartments* assigned to him in the College, the idea of apartments in our houses amusing him very much.[1]

There are some words in the English language which need to be handled delicately, for otherwise unpleasant ' overtones ' mar their music. Among them is the word ' edification.' Owing to its misuse by certain pious writers, this word has acquired an alien connotation of smugness or even mild hypocrisy, but in its root meaning it signifies a very fine thing, a charity which builds up, strengthens, and comforts. Peter Spinelli understood it in that sense and valued it correspondingly. Someone came to him to protest against the treatment meted out to Father Bellarmine, supposing that it must have been due to the negligence of an intermediate superior. No, said Father Peter ; I alone am responsible. Father Bellarmine is a very distinguished man and a saint, and I thought it would be good for the young men of this house to see how distinguished people who are saints behave under unpleasant circumstances.[2]

The ' vita quieta ' which Blessed Robert loved was broken at this time by a journey across hills and valleys to Montepulciano. Thomas, inquisitive but very dear, had fallen seriously ill, and his brother-in-law, Signor Joseph Vignanesi, set out for Rome to break the bad news to Father Robert. Vignanesi relates that he fell in with a foreigner—*un'oltramontano*—on the way, and that this person asked what was taking him to Rome. ' I answered that I was going in search of Father Bellarmine, whereupon he exclaimed with great excitement, *et tu vides et alloqueris Bellarminum*—you actually see and talk with Bellarmine ? I said that I had both seen and talked, and that if he would care for a similar interview I would arrange it. I fixed an hour there and then, and when it arrived we went together to the Roman College where Father Bellarmine was living. As soon as this foreign gentleman set his eyes on the Father, he fell upon his knees and approached him in that posture. Then throwing his arms around Bellarmine's knees so that the Father had great difficulty in persuading him to rise, he protested in Latin, that should God be pleased to bestow Heaven upon his soul he would owe the favour in large measure to his writings.' [3]

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[1] *Summarium*, num. 29, § 20, p. 105.

[2] Fuligatti, *Vita*, p. 123.

[3] *Summarium*, num. 5, § 1–2, p. 4. Testimony of Signor Joseph Vignanesi.

On reaching Montepulciano, Father Robert is said to have spent the whole night in prayer at his brother's bedside. Some months later when the invalid was quite restored to health, he received the following letter from Rome:

> When I was with you, our sister Catherine revealed to me her desire to become a nun in the Convent of St. Bernard. I put many difficulties which the project presented, especially your advanced age, before her, and exhorted her to give the matter her deepest thought and to pray very earnestly about it, as I myself would do and have done. Further, I told her that perhaps I might be able to help her to come to Rome during the Holy Year (A.D. 1600) so that she might pursue her devotions here, amidst the many sacred monuments of Christianity. My principal idea in saying this was to test the strength of her vocation. After a few days, she returned and assured me that she had prayed hard and considered everything carefully, but still remained firmly convinced that she was called to religion. I had not the courage to test her any further, but told her, all the same, that in my opinion she ought on no account to speak to you about the matter until you were quite well again, nor, I added, until your wife's baby was born. She gave me her promise that she would not, and I understand that she kept it.
>
> Now, however, that you have both recovered she is anxious to carry out her holy purpose, but would like first to obtain your sanction. As her age would render her a burden to the convent, it is only right that she should bring a dowry. This is not very large, and as I think it my duty to help her in every way I can, I now beg you to accept her decision as the will of God, and let her go where her conscience calls her. Do not imagine that you are throwing away the little sum which she takes with her to the convent. God will not fail to reward your generosity. Besides, that poor convent has more need of help than yourself. Our other sister, Vittoria, has been, and is, a considerable burden to its finances, so we ought to do the nuns whatever little services we have in our power. I need not say any more as I feel sure that you will prove liberal beyond anything that I have suggested.[1]

Father Robert's devotion to his own kith and kin is a pleasant, sweetly human trait in his character, but the tenderest ties in his life were not based on consanguinity. At this time he began one of his most beautiful friendships. Pope Clement appointed him an examiner of bishops-elect and in this capacity he was first brought into touch with St. Francis de Sales. On 22 March 1598 St. Francis stood meekly before himself, Cardinal Baronius, and Cardinal Borromeo to be catechized on his theology. Father Robert asked him a stock, scholastic question: Is the formal happiness of the Blessed in the understanding or the will or both together? St. Francis defended the last hypothesis, and as that happened to be Bellarmine's own view, he was not worried with any very serious objections. The two men took to one another there and then. It was love at first sight, and it grew in intensity as their acquaintance ripened, up to Bellarmine's last year on earth.[1]

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[1] Le Bachelet, *Bellarmin avant son Cardinalat*, pp. 404–405.

8. Clement VIII, with whom Father Robert is to be closely united through many later pages of this book, was an ideal Pope. As a young nobleman he had kept singularly free from the vices then so prevalent in the aristocracy, and later, as an ecclesiastic, he had put himself during thirty years under the guidance of St. Philip Neri. So thoroughly had he imbibed the spirit of his director that when he became Pope, people said it was as if St. Philip himself had been elected. St. Philip was very old at that time, and accordingly resigned his office of confessor to his great disciple Baronius. Bellarmine told his cousin Mgr. Cervini in 1597 that this saintly man 'went every morning to his Holiness to hear his confession.'[2] In Clement was found a rare combination of deep piety with consummate statesmanship. Undeterred by Spanish bluster and intrigue he took, in 1595, the brave step of solemnly absolving King Henry IV, thereby ending the thirty years religious war in France. Two years later Alfonso II, Duke of Ferrara, died childless, having bequeathed his dominions to his illegitimate cousin, Cesare d'Este, Duke of Modena. Now Ferrara had been for centuries a fief of the Holy See, and St. Pius V had decreed some years earlier that if the Este family died out the Duchy should come under the direct jurisdiction of the Popes. The pretender Cesare naturally enough refused to acquiesce, and prepared to claim his illegal inheritance by force of arms, with the support of Venice, Tuscany, and, of course, everlastingly meddlesome Spain. Pope Clement, nothing daunted, excommunicated Cesare, and collected a force of 25,000 men to give point to his bull.[3] These vigorous proceedings frightened off the claimant's allies, so at the beginning of 1598 he sent in his submission

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[1] C. A. de Sales, *Histoire du Bienheureux François de Sales*, 5th ed., 1870, t. 1, p. 266.

[2] Le Bachelet, *Bellarmin avant son Cardinalat*, p. 402.

[3] Cf. Cocquelines' *Bullarum Collectio*, Rome, 1753, t. v, pars 2a, pp. 175–178, 181–193, 199–206.

and evacuated Ferrara. The tyranny and grinding exactions of the House of Este had long since alienated the subjects of the Duchy, and the brilliance of the most refined and elegant Court in Europe helped very little to compensate the oppressed lower orders for their own undistinguished sufferings. To win their affection the Pope decided to make a personal tour of his new dominion.

On April 13 the grand cortège left Rome. Clement had sixteen cardinals and a host of prelates and ambassadors in his retinue, prominent among them being Baronius. Father Bellarmine was there, too, as the Pope's special theologian, and we are told that Baronius seized every opportunity which offered, to get near him. To have him in to dinner was the Oratorian's particular delight, but Father Robert seems to have been a little reluctant, thinking that such familiarity with Cardinals did not become a mere private in the ranks.[1] The route taken was by Loreto, and as Bellarmine's family had always shown particular devotion to the *Santa Casa*, he doubtless made the best possible use of his three days stay in its vicinity. What his views were about the historicity of the miracle we do not know, for he expressed no opinion, one way or the other, in his references to the matter. Probably like everybody else he took the truth of the legend for granted.[2] After leaving Loreto the cortège moved on by Ancona and through the Romagna to Ravenna. At length, on May 1, the Pope made his solemn entry into the famous city of dukes, painters, and poets. The procession was headed by scions of the most illustrious houses in Italy, after whom came the cardinals in their robes of state, mounted upon mules. Fifty boys of noble Ferrarese blood marched next, all decked out gorgeously in doublets of silver cloth, velvet mantles, and collars of gold, with jewelled swords and daggers at their hips. Immediately behind them was borne the Holy Father on his chair of state, in full pontificals, while the rear was brought up by mounted prelates and ambassadors, and the multi-coloured cavalry of the noble guard. The broad streets were lined with troops in their war regalia, and artillery thundered out repeated salvoes as the brilliant pageant swept up to the steps of the Cathedral. A Papal chamberlain meantime scattered largesse to the multitude who deafened the heavens with their 'Evvivas!'[1]

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[1] Bartoli, *Vita*, p. 192, quoting the Roman Process of 1622.

[2] Cf. his long description of Pope Marcello's devotion to the Holy House, published in Oldoini's *Vitae et res gestae Pontificum Romanorum*, Rome, 1677, vol. III, col. 808.

Like a true Italian, Bellarmine was fond of pageantry, but like a true man of prayer, he was not fond of it in excess. The Court at Ferrara was altogether too splendid and noisy for his taste, so he declined Pope Clement's offer of a suite at the Ducal Palace, and lodged instead with his religious brethren at their college in the Via Borgoleone. When, twenty-three years later, a Jesuit named Antony Barisoni assumed the rectorship of the college, he declared that he found the memory of Father Robert's stay still vivid and fresh, and as much honoured as if he had been a canonized saint.[2] There, as everywhere else, he showed himself a friend to each and all who sought his help, and threw himself into the small plans and interests of schoolboys with as much happy abandon as into the Pope's or General's serious business. Aquaviva and he corresponded very frequently during the whole period, the General sending such thrilling items of news as that 'six Franciscans, three of our own brothers, and seventeen lay Christians have been crucified by order of the Tyrant of Japan.'[3]

All the letters are full of Baronius because the General knew well that Father Robert and he were inseparable friends. On June 3 he wrote:

> *Padre mio*, I would like you to repeat what I am going to say now, to the Holy Father and to Cardinal Baronius. I hear from France that the King and his councillors are thinking of expelling us from that country. Rumours against us are rife, and predictions of our speedy banishment are to be heard everywhere. Public opinion is thus being mischievously affected, and it is necessary that his Holiness should be made aware of the manœuvres.[4]

Shortly afterwards the Jesuits were driven out of various localities in France. Father Robert was tireless in his efforts to have them restored. In a note appended to his Autobiography he writes:

> On several occasions I exhorted the Pope to instruct his Legate, the Cardinal of Florence, to work with all diligence for the restora-

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[1] The authority for these picturesque details is Cardinal Bentivoglio. *Opere storiche*, t. v, *Memorie*, Milan, 1807, lib. 1, c. iii.

[2] Letter of 2 November 1621. Quoted by Bartoli, *Vita*, p. 176.

[3] Le Bachelet, *Bellarmin avant son Cardinalat*, p. 407.

[4] Le Bachelet, p. 408. This letter of the General was evidently written under the stress of deep emotion. It is almost impossible to translate it literally.

tion of our Fathers. His Holiness took my counsel and showed me the letters which he had written. I also sought the help of the Archbishop of Rennes, who afterwards became Cardinal d'Ossat, and he too addressed very fine letters to the King on our behalf, and gave me good hopes of a successful issue to the negotiations.[1]

At this same time another curious affair was causing the General anxiety. A Spanish Father named Pacheco had come to Ferrara with the wild idea in his head of founding an order of discalced or barefooted Jesuits. How the removal of boots and shoes was to be an improvement on the original plan of St. Ignatius does not appear, but for all his *bizarrerie*, Pacheco was a somewhat dangerous person. He had done fine work among the Moors, and Pope Clement in recognition of it might have been ready to see something in his scheme for a reform of the Society of Jesus. Aquaviva was all the more worried because the good man made a great mystery of his negotiations with the Pope. Once again, then, he addressed himself to Father Robert, begging him to keep the conspirator under observation because, though 'an honest soul he was simple and of a melancholy nature.' 'His last letter made me anxious,' continues the General. 'Though he told me that he had been conducting business with the Holy Father, he gave me no hint of the nature of his business. . . . And I strongly suspect it has something to do with the Society, in spite of his apparent assurance that it has not. . . . I was delighted to hear that the matter, whatever it may be, is in the hands of Cardinal Baronius, and I think it would be a very good thing if you would find out all about it from him.'[2]

This 'episodio semicomico', as Astrain terms it,[3] continued to trouble both Aquaviva and Bellarmine for months. Towards the end of November the General wrote:

> I don't know what to say to your Reverence about Father Pacheco. He says one thing one minute, and another thing the next. I thought I had done with him after the receipt of a note, which I will show you when you return, where he professes that he is content to stand by the decision of his superiors. Now however he is weakening and wavering once more.[4]

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[1] Le Bachelet, *Bellarmin avant son Cardinalat*, p. 467. An edict re-admitting the Jesuits was issued in 1603.

[2] Le Bachelet, *l.c.*, pp. 409–410.

[3] *Historia de la Compañia de Jesús en la Asistencia de España*, t. III, Madrid, 1909, p. 625.

[4] Le Bachelet, *Bellarmin avant son Cardinalat*, p. 429.

Father Bellarmine did not weaken, conscious as he was of the danger to his Order, and owing to the strenuous opposition of himself and Baronius, Jesuits are still allowed to go about in boots or shoes. Pacheco was sent back to his Moors, having by the Pope's order been deprived of the degree of Professed Father for which his intemperate zeal rendered him unfitted.[1]

Another Father named Angelo Pilo also came to Ferrara with a grievance. He refused to go where his superiors had sent him because he had not been professed, and determined to lay his case before Pope Clement. Aquaviva wrote to Bellarmine in great distress:

> We who know what sort of man he is fear that his appeal to the Pope is only a blind, his real idea being to have a good time for a while, even though discipline should suffer severely, and many others be injured by his example. I do not tell your Reverence this with a view to your putting our case before the Pope. I merely want you to be aware of the true state of affairs. . . .[2]

Aquaviva knew the man he was addressing. The excellent historian, Jouvency, gives the sequel of the story:

> The Father's speech which was composed to elicit pity had already won the Pope when Robert Bellarmine opportunely arrived on the scene. He reminded the Holy Father about the distinction of grades in the Society, the diligence and conscientious care that were used in assigning each the grade for which he was best fitted, and the qualities which the Popes themselves desired to see in those who were chosen for profession. That Pilo lacked these qualities, he continued, was abundantly clear from the certain and secret testimony of men whose prudence could not be called in question. The General had no power to promote whomsoever he wished to that grade, but had to be guided by the judgment and sworn evidence of the best qualified Fathers. Then he begged Clement to consider the damage to the Society that would follow if each subject were allowed to refuse the grade assigned to him, and the Pope, convinced by his reasoning, left Aquaviva free to do as he considered best with Pilo.[3]

But the General's troubles were not yet at an end. After weighing carefully every aspect of the question, he had appointed a Neapolitan Father named Lisio as Provincial of the Venetian Jesuits. If anyone is under the delusion that religious vows extinguish national feelings, those Venetian Fathers will enlighten him. They made a great clamour about 'foreign rule' and even complained to the Pope against the indignity of having a subject of the King of Spain put over them. Men will be men however many vows they take. Here again Bellarmine saved the situation and won the embarrassed General's most hearty thanks.

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[1] Le Bachelet, *Bellarmin avant son Cardinalat*, p. 467.

[2] Le Bachelet, *l.c.*, p. 429.

[3] *Historiae Societatis Jesu, pars quinta, tomus posterior*, Rome, 1710, lib. XI, n. 123, p. 37.

> I consider [he wrote on July 18] that it was the Providence of God that sent you to Ferrara to act as our advocate with the charity you bear the Society and the holy zeal you have for the common good. . . . I thank you with all my heart for your past and present services, and I feel very sure that the Divine Majesty will not fail to reward your Reverence's love and fidelity to your Order.[1]

These victories may appear insignificant, but in such a wide and closely-welded organization as the Society of Jesus they were as momentous, comparatively, as the famous victories which have time and again saved civil society from disruption. In the following pages the reader will see many more and greater examples of the filial love and loyalty which Robert Bellarmine always kept for the order of his choice. It was a very deep love but it was without competitiveness, and other religious orders had a place of their own in his heart,—especially the sons of St. Francis.

9. Among those who had come with Pope Clement to Ferrara was old Cardinal Valier who had plotted so vigorously to obtain a red hat for Father Robert. With him was his delightful nephew, Peter, soon himself to be in the purple.

> One day [Peter relates] my uncle said to me, I want you to make the acquaintance of the greatest little man in the world—*del maggior piccolo che sia al Mondo*. It was Bellarmine he meant, and he continued that if I got nothing else out of my visit to Ferrara, the friendship of such a man would be enough to win for me afterwards everybody's esteem; indeed, to render me capable of rising to the grandest heights. And that was exactly what happened, for I owe all my success in life to the unfailing kindness of this great servant of God.[2]

In October the great little man told his brother that he was as busy as usual—*occupatissimo al solito*—but that fact did not hinder him in the least from making everybody's worries his own. Poor Mgr. Cervini had discovered what he thought was an error in the brief which had been obtained for him with such trouble, and wrote to Ferrara in great anxiety. The kind heart of his cousin is very apparent in the answer he penned :

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[1] Le Bachelet, *Bellarmin avant son Cardinalat*, pp. 415–416.
[2] Bartoli, *Vita*, p. 537. *Testimonianza del Sig. Card. Pietro Valier.*

> You have good reason to complain about those officials of the Chancery, and I am much annoyed with them myself. But do not be afraid that you will lose the Abbey. You have more friends at Court than you imagine. Besides, the Holy Father would not permit such a thing to happen. To get the error corrected it will be necessary for you to send me here either the brief itself, or a copy, and then I shall obtain a copy of the original petition from Rome so that we may see how the mistake crept in. You need have no fear about its being corrected, so whatever happens do not worry.[1]

Father Robert at once wrote to Rome complaining that the brief had been incorrectly drawn up, and demanding redress. The following is the mocking answer which he received from a witty official : 'I shall be very glad to learn that up to the receipt of this communication your Reverence has refrained from saying hard things to the Pope about the clerks of the Chancery. You know his Holiness might well have burst out laughing and told you, as I tell you now, that these fine points of canon law are not to be found in the holy Fathers over whose pages your Reverence is eternally poring!'[2] Blessing his stars, the Pope's theologian took up his pen to write to Cervini :

> We both of us misinterpreted that brief, and I am as pleased as anything that I kept quiet about it in the Pope's presence, for otherwise I would have made a nice fool of myself. My silence was due to a mere accident. I have my audience with his Holiness each Thursday morning, after the meeting of the Holy Office, but there have been no audiences for the last three Thursdays on account of the Pope's gout. With this I kiss your hand and send you my heartiest greetings and promises of most willing service in any way that you may care to use me.[3]

Nearly every letter which Blessed Robert wrote at this time, and there were scores upon scores of them, was concerned with some charitable business on behalf of other people.

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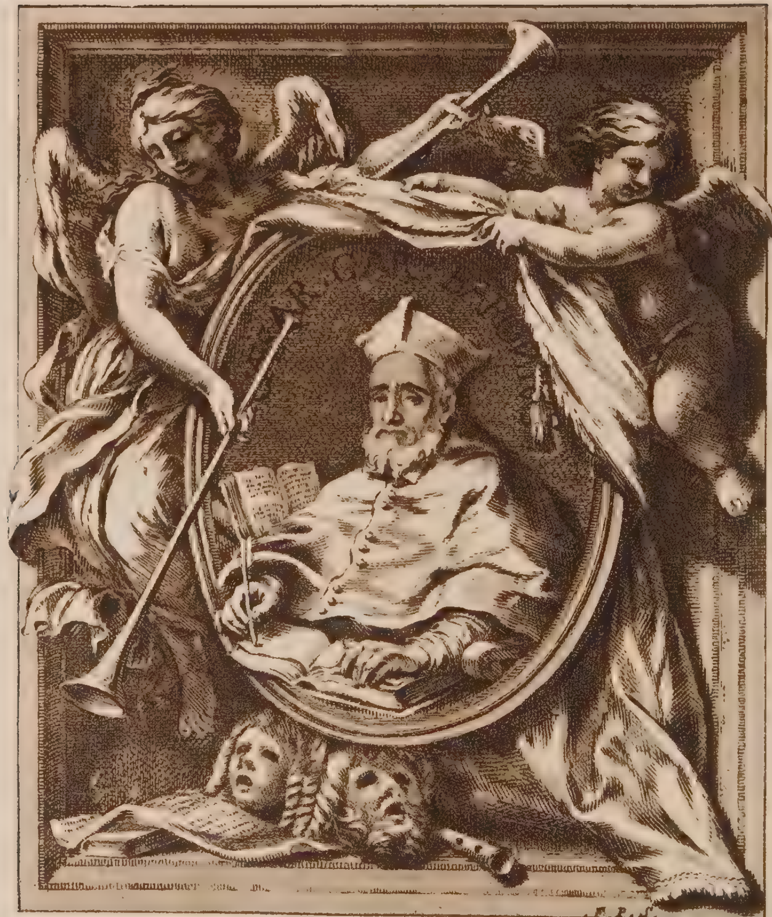
[1] Le Bachelet, *Bellarmin avant son Cardinalat*, p. 416.

[2] Le Bachelet, *l.c.*, p. 419, n. 1.

[3] Le Bachelet, *l.c.*, pp. 419–420.



CARDINAL BARONIUS, BLESSED ROBERT BELLARMINE'S DEAREST FRIEND.

His Cervini relatives seem to have been in difficulties all the time and he never grew tired of helping them out, whether it was some impoverished cleric that wanted a benefice or some orphan boys or girls that needed a home. They turned to him as naturally as a child to its mother because they knew what he was like, and they were never disappointed. If he could not always give them material help he could give his prayers and sympathy, and these had a strange power to make troubles seem light and bearable.

On August 11 he told his brother Thomas an unusual piece of news, actually talking about himself: 'The Pope goes to the villa Bel Riguardo on Monday for ten or twelve days' holiday, and Cardinal Baronius and myself are going to take a walk to Venice during his absence, if we can get leave. I am going to ask for it for both of us on Thursday next.'[1] The leave was obtained and the two friends set off as gaily as a pair of boys, visiting Padua as well as Venice.[2] The most famous literary character in Padua at that time was a certain John Vincent Pinelli, who played the rôle of Maecenas to all the city's distinguished visitors. Bellarmine and Baronius decided that they must make the acquaintance of the great John Vincent, and being in holiday mood, thought it would be no harm to try a small practical joke on him. Accordingly they disguised themselves as best they could, and then knocked at Pinelli's door. Now Pinelli had a portrait gallery in his house, and among the paintings in it were ones of Bellarmine and Baronius. He recognized his visitors at a glance but being himself fond of a joke, greeted them as perfect strangers. They would like to see his collection of portraits, no doubt. Yes, he had all the most celebrated people in Europe in the collection. That man up there, he said addressing Bellarmine, is the great Baronius. Then glancing from the picture to the portly, square-built, dark-haired Cardinal and from the Cardinal to the picture, he remarked: 'What an extraordinary likeness this portrait bears to your friend.' After moving round for a little time followed by his visitors, Pinelli stopped again in front of another picture. This, he said, turning to Baronius, is the famous Father Bellarmine, and wonder after wonder it is the living image of your companion. Seeing that they were discovered, the visitors laughed and Pinelli laughed and they all embraced and sat down together to a delightful dinner.[1]

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[1] Le Bachelet, *Bellarmin avant son Cardinalat*, p. 422.

[2] This we learn from another letter of September 7, and also that the journey was not merely a pilgrimage to St. Anthony's tomb, as Bartoli would have us piously believe. Father Robert himself says that it was a *ricreatione* and continues: 'I think that the thirteen days' freedom from business and studies did us a great deal of good.' Le Bachelet, *l.c.*, p. 422.

When Father Robert returned to Ferrara the city was excitedly awaiting the advent of Princess Margaret of Austria, who was to be married by proxy, before the Pope, to the new King of Spain, Philip III, She arrived on November 13, and among other celebrations in honour of the wedding there was a play on the subject of Judith and Holofernes, acted by the boys of the Jesuit College.[2] Father Bellarmine was appointed stage-manager. To his horror, only a few hours before the performance was due to begin in the presence of the new Queen and her Court, the youth who had been chosen to recite the long prologue collapsed, probably through fright. Bellarmine himself tells us what he did under the circumstances: ‘ I sat down at once and wrote another and shorter prologue in iambics, which could be memorized without any difficulty.’[3] That was his last feat in Ferrara. On December 29 he wrote from Rome to his brother Thomas:

> The Holy Father has returned hale and hearty[4] from Ferrara, I myself had an extremely comfortable journey in Cardinal Cesi's coach, together with Cardinal Baronius and Cardinal Aldobrandini. Such were the Holy Father's instructions, and there was a horse for me, too, whenever I cared to ride, and I had the finest accommodation you could imagine. The Pope is much troubled about the Tiber floods, which are the worst that have ever been known. God grant that nothing more terrible may happen. However, patience is the remedy for every evil.[5]

10. All this time, the shadow which the humble-hearted lover of books and quietude so dreaded was stealing nearer. Everybody knew by then that he was destined for the purple. On 21 January 1599 Aquaviva named him Rector of the Penitenzieria, having first asked Pope Clement whether he had any objection. No, said the diplomatic Pontiff, and a

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[1] This story is from Paul Gualdo's *Vita Joannis Vincentii Pinelli*, Augsburg, 1607, p. 19. It is repeated in Mazzuchelli's *Gli Scrittori d'Italia*, Brescia, 1760, vol. II, part I, p. 389.

[2] *Lettres du Cardinal d'Ossat*, ed. 1732, t. III, p. 199. Other details are given in *The Happy Entrance of the highborne Queen of Spain*, etc., London, 1599.

[3] *Autobiography*, num. iii.

[4] ‘ Sanissimo et allegro.’

[5] Le Bachelet, *Bellarmin avant son Cardinalat*, p. 432.

new ray of hope dawned in the hearts of the two friends.[1] But that welcome negative was only a brief reprieve. While it lasted, Father Robert went on with his ordinary duties, full of alternate hopes and fears. Baronius used often to come and take him out for drives in his carriage, but there was invariably an argument on such occasions because the Rector was very shy of being seen publicly in such grand company. He chose Father Francis Rocca for his confessor at this time, and kept him for the rest of his life. Rocca testified on oath that during those twenty-two years it was only with the greatest difficulty he could ferret out the least matter for absolution, though his penitent had a very tender conscience and examined himself most rigorously.[2]

One day an old pupil of the Rector's named Francis Dietrichstein came to have a little talk. In the course of the conversation the visitor hinted that his host would soon be a prince, if rumour spoke aright. Bellarmine looked at him with a sad smile and pointed to his books: 'These are the only cardinalate for which I feel the slightest inclination,' he said.[3] Before going on to his story in the purple, it is necessary to tell something more about those beloved books and the good work that was the fruit of his communings with them.

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[1] Cf. *Autobiography*, num. xxxiii.
[2] *Summarium additionale*, num. 2, § 31, p. 15.
[3] *L.c.*, num. 28, p. 82. Testimonio del Sig. Card. Francesco Dietrichstein.

CHAPTER XVI

ESSAYS IN CRITICISM

1. Heresy, to be plausible, must always have some theory of continuity, and for that reason the learned disciples of Luther devoted much of their energy to the growing of a genealogical tree. The centuries were scoured for the purpose of discovering pre-Reformation ' protestants ' and the supposed ' find ' over which there was most rejoicing was the poet Dante. In 1556, Flaccius Illyricus, the founder of the Magdeburg school, published a book entitled *A Catalogue of Witnesses to the Truth, who in former Ages denied the Pope*, in which may be read, number 300, ' Dante, the Florentine, a pious and learned man.'

This effort, however, was merely a hint to Protestant apologists, and not till thirty years later was Dante first presented to the world, with due ceremony, as a genuine herald of the Reformation. When on 6 September 1585 Pope Sixtus V had excommunicated Henry of Navarre, the French Calvinists, whose hope and hero he was, were roused to a terrible pitch of fury. Henry himself, as has been seen, made a spirited retort to the Pope, and this gesture was the immediate inspiration of a small Italian book that appeared in Monaco in 1586, with the title : *Courteous Advice to beautiful Italy from a young French Nobleman, concerning the Lie given to Pope Sixtus V by his Highness the King of Navarre.*[1] Its author is known to have been a certain French Calvinist named Francis Perrot, who had spent a good deal of time in Italy and there made the acquaintance of Paolo Sarpi.[2] He wrote Italian like a native, and that facility determined him to carry the war into the enemy's camp by an attempt to show Italians that the proudest name in their literature was listed against the Holy See.

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[1] *Aviso piacevole Dato alla Bella Italia da un Nobile Giovane Francese sopra la mentita data dal Serenissimo Re di Navarra a Papa Sisto V.* Only one copy of this small volume is known to exist at present.

[2] J. A. Thuanii, *Historiarum sui temporis libri* 138. Geneva, 1626–1630, vol. IV, p. 48.

His 'Advice,' which is divided into three parts, professed to be courteous but began thus: 'Though the Pope, Fair Italy, is known to-day by all the world for what he is, namely the Man of Sin, the Son of Perdition, the loathly Antichrist painted for us by the Apostle, yet does he not shame to lift up his horns once more that he may terrorize infants and poor silly men. All men ought to laugh such an impostor to scorn, ought to detest him more than the deadliest plague, and so all men would had they but eyes to see and a little sense to understand.' The second part had the following words for a heading: 'The true and living image of the Pope and all the Papal Court as drawn for us in the ancient writings of Dante, Petrarch, and Boccaccio, who are the three principal lights of Italian literature.' These men are then crowned with every virtue and fine quality, and solemnly invested with the mantle of prophecy inasmuch as they had clearly foretold the downfall of the Holy See. In the third part, Perrot turns poet himself with fifty-one disgustingly vulgar sonnets in scorn of the Papacy in general, and Sixtus V in particular.

People who knew their Dante well would not have been impressed by Dr. Francis' anthology, but such people were in those days comparatively few, and it was the others, the half-educated masses, for whom the lucubration was intended. These it might well have influenced, for it was written breezily in a tongue they could understand. Consequently, the ever-watchful Bellarmine determined to answer it. His reply was published as an appendix to the treatise on the Pope, in the 1599 edition of the Controversies, but from internal evidence, it appears to have been written late in 1595 or early in 1596,[1] that is, during the busy years of his Provincialate at Naples. As it has not been dealt with in any of the old or more recent books about him, and is, besides, a peculiarly interesting example of his versatility in scholarship, it will not be out of place to say a few words about it now.[2]

The reply is divided into twenty-four chapters, the first eleven of which are occupied with the title of the *Aviso* and its preliminary discourse on Antichrist. The anonymity and flippant style of the tract made Father Robert angry. Commenting on the complacent words 'a young French Nobleman,' he says:

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[1] In chapter iii, he says: 'Not many months have passed since Clement VIII, who now sits on Blessed Peter's throne, received letters from the (Coptic) Patriarch of Alexandria acknowledging him to be the head of that Patriarchate and the vicar of Christ over the universal Church.' These letters of re-union were dispatched in 1595.

[2] The centenary years of the poet and the theologian coincide almost exactly. Dante died on 14 September 1321 and Bellarmine on 17 September 1621.

> Whether the author be a Frenchman or not, is of no consequence. But he need not have told us that he was young, for the arrogance, pertness, flippancy, and ignorance of his every page, are sufficient proof of the fact. As to his being noble, I must say I find it difficult to believe, unless indeed the title indicates not a nobleman but some nobleman's clown. Certainly the foul language and scurrilous abuse with which his book reeks, are more suited to the mouth of a stable-boy or tough old salt than to lips with gentle blood in them.[1]

After this sufficiently scathing preface, Father Robert patiently turns for the *n*th time to the wearisome examination of the old, dead arguments by which the Pope was proved to be Antichrist. Antichrist dismissed, Dante, Petrarch and Boccaccio come on the scene. Bellarmine's first reception of them does not appear too cordial, for he immediately sets about removing the extravagant haloes with which Perrot had decorated their heads. They were witnesses, said he, whose authority none could question.

> Why not? [asks Father Robert]. You just watch me questioning their authority. Dante, the most serious and sensible of the three, was grossly mistaken if not a downright liar in what he wrote about Pope Anastasius, as I shall prove to you completely in due course.

The learning of these men, the antiquity of their witness, and the saintliness of their lives, were other points upon which Perrot harped. 'St. Bernard and innumerable other men, both of earlier date and greater learning, defended the dignity of the Holy See with all their might,' answered Bellarmine:

> As for the sanctity of Petrarch and Boccaccio, I could scarcely restrain my laughter, when I saw it alleged. Why, their Italian writings, for which this youth has such enthusiastic praise, are almost all on the one theme of lust, so that Petrarch himself grew to be thoroughly ashamed of them. These, save the mark, are the prophets of Luther's and Calvin's new dispensation. I think, Sir, you must have learned this Gospel from your bishop, Beza, to whom we are indebted for so many love-songs, some of them to Candida and the boy Audebert being vile enough in all conscience.

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[1] *Disputationes de Controversiis*, Paris ed., 1608, tomus 1, col. 1015.

Another quality in his witnesses which Perrot stressed was their impartiality and calmness of temper, but with Dante's and Petrarch's record at his fingers' tips, Bellarmine soon disposed of that part of the panegyric. As to their alleged prophecy of Rome's downfall, he said that he preferred to believe another one which ran, Upon this rock I will build my Church and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.[1]

Having thus brought the poets to earth, and set the problem in its right perspective, he turned to the more congenial task of defending their orthodoxy. His own great love for letters must not be forgotten. As a boy he had been enthralled by the great poem of him who symbolized for Dante the perfection of human reason, and was Dante's laurel-crowned guide through the Inferno. The two great learned loyalties of his life were to Aristotle and St. Thomas, and of them the *Divina Commedia* is all compact. Finally, the qualities which Tuscan Dante loved best and oftenest ascribed to his *Beatrice si bella e ridente* were exactly those which made Tuscan Bellarmine the idol of his acquaintances—courtesy, candour, kindness, humility, modesty, loyalty, and gentleness. It is not surprising then that he should have been attracted to the *Divina Commedia*, have studied the best commentaries available, and become as familiar with its cantos as he was with the books of the Bible.

2. The charges against Dante's orthodoxy are grouped under five heads, the first being that he denounces the vices of Popes and clergy. Bellarmine investigates the rights and wrongs of the poet's wrath against each of the six Popes in Perrot's pillory. In the case of Anastasius II, whom Dante had placed among the heretics in Hell, he proves by dates and references that the charge of heresy against this Pope was due entirely to the blunder of some historians in confusing him with the Emperor of the same name. As for the presence in the Inferno of St. Celestine V, *che fece per viltà il gran rifiuto*, the many miracles worked by him, both before and after his resignation, are the best evidence of Dante's injustice.[2]

Bellarmine readily admits that there was a case for the denunciation of the other four Popes in the list—Nicholas III, Boniface VIII, Clement V, and John XXII, but he points out that they were censured for their lives and conduct, not for their faith and teaching.

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[1] *Disputationes*, I, coll. 1024–1025.

[2] The reason for Dante's dislike of San Celestino was because by his 'gran rifiuto' he was indirectly responsible for the advent to power of the great Guelf Pope, Boniface VIII.

> When reading Dante's stern reproofs [he continues], it ought, in fairness, to be remembered that the poet was a Ghibelline, and would seem to have been inspired at such moments, not by love of truth, but rather by hatred of his political enemies. My good opponent deserts Dante when it suits him, as for instance when the Donation of Constantine is in question. If he thinks it lawful to doubt at times one whom he would have us honour as a prophet, why should not we be allowed to doubt one whom we know to have been not a prophet but a poet ?

Perrot had laid special emphasis on the passage in the Inferno where Nicholas III is sternly addressed (XIX, 106 sqq.), but the answer this time, his critic points out, is given by Dante himself in the preceding lines :

If reverence of the keys restrained me not,
Which thou in happier time didst hold, I yet
Severer speech might use.[1]

' So great was the poet's reverence for the supreme keys,' Bellarmine continues, ' that not even in Hell does he dare to address a Pope disrespectfully.'

Another passage on which the Calvinist writer laid stress was that in which Beatrice explained to the frightened poet a strange vision that he had seen in Purgatory :

The vessel, which thou saw'st the serpent break,
Was and is not : let him who hath the blame,
Hope not to scare God's vengeance with a sop.
(*Purg.*, XXXIII, 34.)

Perrot correctly interpreted the vessel to mean the Roman Church, and then, with a smart gloss of his own, argued that Dante must here have been thinking of the Beast of the Apocalypse, which also ' was and is not ' (Apoc. xvii.). Still more ingenious was his explanation of the word sop, which signified nothing less than the Sacrifice of the Mass. Bellarmine admitted that Dante was referring to the Church, but urged that the phrase ' was and is not ' must be taken in a comparative sense, namely that the Church, owing to the residence of the Popes at Avignon, was no longer so illustrious for the virtue and good lives of her pastors and children as she had formerly been. In this contention, it need hardly be said, he has all the best modern commentators, both Catholic and non-Catholic, on his side. As for the word 'suppe' referring to the Mass, he has only pity for the ignorance of such a suggestion. The commentators, Imolese and Landino, certain records of Dante's own family, and the traditions of Florence, all bear witness that the word refers to a superstition prevalent by the Arno in the fourteenth century:

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[1] Cary leaves out an important word in this version. Dante does not say ' the keys,' but ' the supreme keys ' (*le somme chiavi*).

> The men of those days believed that murderers would not fall into the hands of their enemies if they had eaten bread soaked in wine (*suppe*), upon the graves of their victims. For this reason, the relatives of murdered men used to guard their tombs carefully, lest the murderers should escape vengeance by eating a sop upon them. Dante's point is that those who injure the Church by their evil lives will not escape the Divine wrath as easily as murderers were superstitiously supposed to be able to escape the wrath of men.[1]

Perrot had also a confident explanation of the mysterious, prophetic lines:

> Without an heir for ever shall not be
> That eagle, he, who left the chariot plum'd . . .
> . . . .
> Five hundred, five, and ten, do mark him out.
> (*Purg.*, XXXIII, 37.)

According to his exegesis, the number represented the year 1515, and plainly pointed to the rise of Martin Luther whose campaign against Rome began within two years of that date.

> Our new Oedipus [answers Bellarmine] forgets that Dante did not intend the number to point to a date at all, but to a person. He does not say that a messenger of God will appear in 1515 but that at some unspecified time God will send an envoy whose identity is signified by the Roman number DXV. In this the poet was imitating the verse of the Apocalypse where Antichrist is described by the number DCLXVI. Further, if Dante really foretold the date of Luther's revolt, why is he two whole years out in his reckoning and why did he omit a thousand years? . . . The true explanation of the passage is to be found, of course, in the transposition of the numerals DXV whereby we get DVX or Dux, a leader.[2]

Father Robert was unquestionably right so far. Whether his identification of the leader with the Prince of Verona,

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[1] *Disputationes*, I, col. 1029.

[2] *L.c.*, I, col. 1030.

Can Grande della Scala, was correct, is more disputable, but at least he gives good reasons for it from other parts of the Divine Comedy, and it was as plausible a surmise as any other that has been made on the same subject.

In his nineteenth chapter he takes the offensive, and cites twenty-seven good passages in proof of Dante's filial devotion to the Holy See and the Church, a devotion so strong that it rises victorious over his worst political prejudices. No Pope did he hate with such virulence as Boniface VIII, and yet when that aged Pontiff was grossly ill-used by Sciarra Colonna at Anagni, he likened the victim to Christ in His Passion:

> I in Alagna see the fleur-de-lis,
> Christ in His Vicar, captive to the foe.
> Him once again as mocked and scorned I see,
> I see once more the vinegar and gall,
> And slain between new robbers hangeth He.
>
> . . . .
>
> When, O my Lord, shall I be satisfied
> With looking on the secret vengeance stored
> Which Thou, Thy wrath assuaging, still dost hide?[1]

Other texts are similarly adduced in proof of Dante's firm faith in all the doctrines of the Church against which the Lutherans and Calvinists most loudly inveighed—the necessity of good works, the freedom of the will, vows, Purgatory, suffrages for the dead, ritual, etc. The religious orders were a main butt of Perrot's attack, so Dante's words about St. Francis and St. Dominic are thrown back at him:

> One seraphic all
> In fervency; for wisdom upon earth
> The other splendour of cherubic light.

Bellarmine rests with his usual partial love on the figure of St. Francis and quotes two other passages that hymn the Poverello's praise.

Then it is Petrarch's turn to be defended. Father Robert was as familiar with his prose and verse as with Dante's, and quotes abundantly from both to prove the vigour of his faith. Perrot pointed out that Pope Pius V had condemned some of his amatory compositions. True enough, was the answer,

> but if Petrarch had known that men would one day use his verses in support of errors which he hated with all his heart he would have

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[1] The translation is from the *Catholic World*, vol. CXIII, p. 789.

cast those verses into the flames with his own hands. Even had the Pope condemned all his love songs, I am sure that his penitent spirit, now with God in Heaven as I believe it to be, would have rejoiced exceedingly.[1]

Passages from the Decameron are not given in their original Italian to prove that Boccaccio was an orthodox Catholic but this, Bellarmine says, is not because such passages were lacking. He could have given plenty, only that such citations would involve wearisome repetitions.

> My hasty opponent makes great capital out of the second story of the Decameron [he continues], and it is true that Boccaccio there signalizes many and serious vices of the Papal Court. But he adds that these very vices are a manifest proof of the truth of the Roman faith, for, says he, it is not only pagans and heretics who attempt to destroy the Church. Her own children and pastors are also to be found ranged against her, labouring by their evil lives to bring her to nothing. Yet she flourishes and goes from strength to strength, so who can deny that she is God's own work and stands not by human power or prudence but by the might of Him who said, Upon this rock I will build my Church and the gates of Hell shall not prevail against it ?[2]

Perrot had produced three ancient witnesses to the corruptions of Rome, wherefore, says his critic,

> he cannot complain if I offer him three modern witnesses to the corruptions of Lutheranism. . . . Let the first be Luther himself, the herald of the Lord predicted by Dante, we are told. Here are his words written in post-script to his sermon on the Gospel of the first Sunday in Advent : 'The world gets worse every day. At the present time men are more revengeful, avaricious, unmerciful, impure, undisciplined, and blackguardly all round, than ever they were under the Papacy.' So says Luther, and they are about the only true words he ever spoke.

If Bellarmine's defence of the great poet of Catholicism does not show him to have been a very profound Dantean scholar according to the standards of the twentieth century, it should be remembered to his credit that no one before him had so much as attempted to put the poet's strictures in their proper historical and psychological setting, which was the best and, indeed, the only way to vindicate the soundness of his allegiance to the Church.[3] The reply to Perrot was in no way intended to be an essay in *belles lettres*, but it affords ample proof, all the same, that Blessed Robert loved his native poets and knew them thoroughly.

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[1] *Disputationes*, I, coll. 1034–1038.

[2] *L.c.*, I, col. 1039.

[3] As a contrast to his sober, scholarly method, we may mention that his brother Jesuit, John Hardouin, who gave us our best edition of the Councils,

3. One of the many matters that occupied his thoughts over a long period of years was the educational policy of his own Order. Circumstances had made the Jesuits a teaching body. The first colleges of their Society to which external scholars were admitted were founded at Gandia in Spain and Messina in Sicily towards the middle of the sixteenth century. They were a mere experiment, conceded reluctantly by St. Ignatius at the urgent demand of dukes and viceroys whom it would have been very difficult to refuse.[1] Sixty years later his Society was directing 293 Colleges.[2] In the fourth part of his Constitutions, the holy Founder had laid down some general principles for the conduct of such educational establishments as had grown up at the time when he wrote. These were mainly seminaries for young Jesuits or mixed institutions combining the idea of a seminary and a college for lay-students, which afterwards by a process of natural development, similar to the fission of a living cell, gave rise to the schools for lay-education as we know them to-day. In a book such as the present, we are concerned only with what St. Ignatius had to say about the higher branches of study, Scripture, philosophy and theology. The following is his ordinance :

> Generally speaking, let such books be expounded in the colleges as shall be found to contain the more solid and safe teaching on each subject. . . . In theology, the Old and New Testaments are to be explained, and the scholastic doctrine of St. Thomas Aquinas taught. In what is known as positive theology, those authors should be chosen who are deemed best suited to our particular educational aim. The Master of the Sentences should also be employed in the lectures, but if in the course of time it is discovered that our students would derive greater advantage from some other author, as for example if some new compendium or work of scholastic theology were composed which appeared better adapted to the needs of our age, then it might be used as a textbook. Such a change, however, ought not to be made without the fullest consideration, nor before submitting the chosen work

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endeavoured to prove, as late as 1727, that the entire *Divina Commedia* was a fifteenth-century forgery ! *Doutes proposez sur l'âge du Dante*, in the *Mémoires de Trevoux*, August 1727.

[1] Cf. *Monumenta Historica S.J. :* Sancti Ignatii Epistolae, vol. 1, pp. 666–673.

[2] Ribadeneira, *Illustrium scriptorum religionis Societatis Jesu*, Antwerp, 1608, p. 287.

to the rigorous criticism of the best-qualified Fathers in the Society, and to the approbation of the Father General. . . . In logic, natural philosophy, ethics, and metaphysics, the doctrine of Aristotle is to be followed.[1]

These temperate and wisely elastic rules gave the Society's first professors their general bearings. They knew the direction of north, south, east, and west, and, provided they kept their faces steadily towards the right point, were not prevented from making such little theological or philosophical detours as their genius might suggest. Theology is not and has never been a mere set of rules or formulæ which professors learn by heart, and then repeat to their pupils, like a gramophone. It is a science that lives and grows like other sciences. It is full of ' blank spaces,' and hints, and implications, just as a child's body and soul are alive with vague prophecies of the man he will one day be. With these the theologian has to deal, has to fill in the blank space if he can, develop the hint, and make explicit the implication. And he knows that though he and all his kind should work till the end of the world the task of theology will never be completed.

St. Ignatius had ruled that the theologians of the Society of Jesus were to follow St. Thomas, but this obviously did not mean that they must accept each and every one of the great Doctor's conclusions. When Robert Bellarmine began as a young man to lecture at Louvain, the favourite doctor in the schools of that University was not St. Thomas but Peter the Lombard. Nevertheless Father Robert unhesitatingly rejected Peter, chose the *Summa* for his guide, and recommended it to his students in words of almost extravagant praise.[2] In doing this, however, he did not bind himself to every word of his text and wrote bluntly about one question ' Nos sententiam D. Thomae in hac parte non sequimur '—in this matter we part company with St. Thomas.[3] Curiously enough, such small and entirely reasonable liberties were hotly resented in certain quarters, both within and without the Society of Jesus. Some Spanish Dominicans of the school of Melchior Cano[4] raised a great outcry, as will be seen in another chapter, but the following letter shows that there were a few

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[1] *Constitutiones cum Declarationibus*, Rome ed., 1908, pars 4a, cap. xiv, pp. 152–154.

[2] *Vide supra*, p. 71.

[3] *Auctarium Bellarminianum*, p. 52.

[4] Cano, as is well known, did everything in his power to crush the Society of Jesus in its cradle.

Jesuits, too, on the war-path. It was addressed to Aquaviva in 1582 by a scare-mongering Spanish Father named Deza:

> The answer which I gave your Paternity when you questioned me about the teaching of our Fathers was more to the point than I could ever have guessed at the time of our conversation. This I have proved by experience since my return to Spain, and especially since my return to the College of Alcala. With regard to my journey to Rome, it looks as if the men here had only waited for me to turn my back for them to turn their backs on St. Thomas. Our professors have, in fact, wandered ever farther from his teaching, without any respect for his authority, and the result is that outside the Society we are losing the esteem and confidence men had for our opinions, while within we are losing the peace and tranquillity of our communities. Such, then, and so great are the liberties which our professors take. They defend themselves by saying that even greater liberties are taken in Italy than in Spain, and in Rome than in the rest of Italy. . . . It rests with your Paternity to decide about this matter and to take whatever steps the service of our Lord and the interests of the Society demand.
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> Are we to see our professors for ever wasting their time inventing fantastic theories, and scattering amongst us opinions either long since dead and buried or so new as never to have been heard of before? . . . How differently our Society is looked upon to-day from what it formerly was! In the past, it was enough to say that an opinion was taught by our masters for it to be accepted as an oracle. This was because the Society's teaching was the teaching of a saint, and a saint who belonged to another order, namely Thomas Aquinas. Thus, being the fruit of the Doctor's sanctity, and of our professors' humility, it could not fail to be excellent. Further, it had the blessing of obedience, for such deference to St. Thomas was what our Constitutions ordained. . . . For my part, I see no other sure remedy for the evils which we suffer, at least as far as Spain is concerned, than a law obliging us to follow St. Thomas in everything.[1]

Seven years after the date of this letter certain Portuguese Fathers addressed the General in the following strain:

> The Master of the Sentences is nowhere taught in our Colleges. In our Schools no name except that of St. Thomas is ever heard. Why are our Constitutions thus allowed to become a dead letter? If Peter Lombard were re-instated, the renown of the Society would assuredly increase because, as far as we know, there is not

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[1] Published from the archives of the Society of Jesus, by Père de Scorraille, *François Suarez* (1911), t. 1, pp. 212–213.

a single university in Christendom where the Master of the Sentences is not officially taught.[1]

Those two letters cancel out beautifully, the plain truth being that the Society remained faithful from the beginning to the spirit of her Founder's ordinance. After St. Thomas himself, the order of St. Dominic produced no greater theologians than Vittoria and Melchior Cano. In his famous work on the foundations of the science in which he was such a master, Cano wrote as follows:

> Theology is not dependent on the words of any man however great. I remember how my professor, Francis Vittoria, used to impress upon us at the opening of his course on the *secunda secundae* of the *Summa*, that if any opinion of St. Thomas was not clearly rendered untenable by some more convincing counter-opinion, then the authority of such a Doctor ought to be enough to make us embrace his view. But he used also to warn us against accepting everything that St. Thomas said without discrimination, for one might meet with assertions in his pages which had little probability or were difficult to allow. Whenever that happened, the right course would be to imitate the modesty and wisdom of the Saint himself who readily acknowledged the authority of writings on which the centuries had set their seal of approval, but who nevertheless refused to adopt their point of view when he had good reasons against it. . . . I, for my part, have ever followed this counsel and, as for my professor, though by nature extremely conservative he sometimes found himself obliged to separate from St. Thomas. At such times he appeared to me more admirable than when following the holy Doctor, so great were the respect and modesty with which he parted from his guide.[2]

It is unnecessary, and happily beside our purpose, to inquire why Cano's brothers in religion forgot his sound advice where the Jesuits were concerned. Certain it is that they did forget it, and the storm they raised, together with the nervous expostulations of some Jesuits, was one of the main reasons which induced Aquaviva to begin the long series of consultations with which we have now to deal.

4. As soon as the Jesuits in the various parts of Europe became clearly conscious that Providence intended the work of their Order to be mainly educational, they began at once to search for a common scheme of studies in which the general principles of St. Ignatius should find detailed application.

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[1] De Scorraille, *François Suarez* (1911), t. I, p. 217.

[2] *De Locis Theologicis*, lib. XII, Proemium.

In 1901, the Spanish editors of the *Monumenta Historica* published a collection of those early efforts in code-making, and nothing could illustrate better the difficulty of the task than the pathetic incompleteness and incoherence of the various programmes and suggestions there set down.[1] Claudius Aquaviva, who became General of the Society of Jesus in 1581, was one of the greatest organizing geniuses known to an age fertile in men of action. In the very congregation which elected him, he began the work which was to be his best monument by appointing a commission of twelve Fathers, *ad conficiendam formulam studiorum.* Not long afterwards, the commissioners had two very important questions ready for debate: 1° Would it be expedient to determine in St. Thomas a certain number of propositions, some of which would be declared obligatory and the rest optional, or would it be sufficient to lay down general rules as to what might or might not be taught? 2° How many years ought to be devoted to the study of theology?

Bellarmine was one of the ten professors to whom these questions were submitted, and his vote on the first was for general rules rather than a list of theses, except in the case of a very few opinions which needed to be defined or explained in order to prevent confusion in the Society's teaching. With regard to the general rules themselves, there were some interesting differences in the voting. Bellarmine's old master, Father Parra, considered that professors should be forbidden to desert St. Thomas in the least point, without the consent of their superiors. Others, including Suarez, held that the superior's leave should be made obligatory only if the professor wanted to leave St. Thomas in the lurch too often and without very good reasons. Bellarmine, apparently, did not think that the superior's leave had anything to do with the matter, and simply voted that St. Thomas should not be abandoned except rarely and when there were weighty authorities and sound reasons against him. All the Fathers agreed that the Society's masters should not be bound to side with any particular group of St. Thomas's commentators.

The advisers were next asked for their opinion on certain propositions which St. Francis Borgia had made law in 1565. The second of these ran: 'Let nothing be defended which is contrary to the received axioms of the philosophers, such as: there are only four elements, there are only four kinds of causes, there are three principles of natural things, fire is warm and dry, air is warm and moist.' Father Parra, a tory of tories, wanted this proposition retained with its four elements, four causes, and three principles. Bellarmine and eight others voted away all the examples and wished the proposition retained only in its naked generality. Nor were their other decisions less broad-minded and far-seeing. Bellarmine's opinion on one point of Borgia's legislation is interesting in view of later events. It ran thus: 'Praedestinationis non datur causa ex parte nostra'—Predestination is not brought about by any human causality. The Rector of the Roman College and Suarez thought that this dictum should be retained as it stood. Bellarmine agreed with them but also urged the following point:

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[1] *Monumenta Paedagogica Soc. Jesu quae primam rationem studiorum Anno* 1586 *editam, praecessere.* Madrid, 1901.

> Some explanation of the words should be added to prevent anybody eluding their force by arguing that though there is no human cause why God should wish to predestine men, yet there *is* a cause why He should have predestined Peter rather than Judas, namely because He foresaw that Peter would co-operate with grace and Judas would not.

The duration of the course of theology in the Society of Jesus was one of the subjects most warmly debated. Suarez and Bellarmine did not see eye to eye on the matter, the Spaniard demanding five years if the number of professors was less than three, and his Italian confrère holding out for four years whatever the number of professors. Suarez argued very well for his own view and it must be admitted that Bellarmine's reply was somewhat unpractical. Nevertheless to the joy of all future generations of young Jesuits it was Bellarmine who prevailed.[1] Throughout all these preliminary discussions he is invariably to be found among the moderates, advocating freedom wherever freedom was possible. The following memorandum written at this time is an excellent illustration of his policy as a theologian. It is a criticism of a suggestion, which probably emanated from Father Deza, to the effect that the Society's professors should be obliged to follow St. Thomas in everything except his supposed views on the conception of the Blessed Virgin:

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[1] The documents relative to all these matters are given in Le Bachelet, *Bellarmin avant son Cardinalat*, appendix x, pp. 500–504.

I quite agree that St. Thomas should be the common authority followed in the Society, and have given my reasons in another place. So far, then, I approve the suggestion contained in the document set before us. But when the writer goes on to demand that everything in the *Summa* be made obligatory except its teaching on the conception of the Blessed Virgin, I find his proposal partly less good, partly too difficult or impossible, and partly unnecessary. First, it seems to me less good, because though for the most part St. Thomas excels all other writers, nobody will deny that in some small matters Scotus, or Durandus, or St. Bonaventure, or Gregory, have argued more soundly than he. Nor is it credible that the light of truth always shone steadily in the mind of the holy Doctor, and never at all in the minds of other men. Since, therefore, we are at liberty to choose the best from every author, why should we deprive ourselves of this advantage?

Father Robert next mentions some opinions of St. Thomas which he considered less probable, or safe, or satisfactory than their contraries. Among them we find the proposition that the world could have been created *ab aeterno*, and the famous passage on the worship due to the image of Christ which has always been the joy of Protestant controversialists. His criticism of this passage is worth quoting:

> Although what St. Thomas writes can be interpreted in a good sense, still, to say without qualification that latreutic worship is due to the image of Christ is to speak in a manner repugnant to the Councils, the Fathers, and the Church's formularies. No Council ever declared that the image of Christ was to be worshipped *cultu latriae*. The second Council of Nicæa expressly decreed that, though the image of Christ was to be worshipped, it was not to be worshipped latreutically, and the Councils of Sens and Mayence, which were held to devise measures against the heretics of the present age, warn pastors to teach their flocks not to adore images but only to venerate them. Similarly, though the Council of Trent used St. Thomas's opinions so freely, it studiously omits the word 'latria' when speaking of images. Indeed, St. Augustine and St. Gregory expressly teach that images are not to be adored with that species of worship, and St. John Damascene repeats more than once that the images of Christ and the Saints are to be honoured, but on no account thus adored. Of all the Church's formularies, those are wont to be most accurately and precisely worded which are proposed for the abjuration of heresy, and here, too, we find it laid down that sacred images are to be honoured, but not worshipped *cultu latriae*. Whatever, then, is to be thought about this matter, it is quite certain that St. Thomas's manner of speaking is not in accordance with that employed by the Catholic Church,

nor, to my mind, would it lack danger if proposed to unlettered congregations. In these and similar questions, I do not see why our Society should not rather give up St. Thomas than the defence of the faith, whether the point be big or small, an opinion or the faulty expression of an opinion.

Bellarmine next proceeds to his second and third objections against the proposal to make all St. Thomas's views obligatory, except that on the Immaculate Conception.

> The plan is too difficult [he says], and perhaps even impossible. Very many of the Society's professors are used to teaching and defending several opinions which openly disagree with the views of the holy Doctor. These professors might, of course, in the spirit of obedience, cease to teach what they have hitherto taught, and might also, perhaps, submit their intellects, and judge to be more probable matters which in the past they had deemed less probable. But they could hardly start at once to teach and defend, in a dignified way, positions which they had formerly opposed. The Dominican Fathers themselves did not reach unanimity about St. Thomas in a single day, or a single year. It was only by slow degrees, and after a long time, that the Saint acquired the authority among them which he now enjoys. So, too, in the Society, it behoves us not to reject out-of-hand all opinions which do not agree with the doctrine of St. Thomas. If he is to be our only doctor, our attitude towards him ought not to be hastily adopted, but should result from progressive and serene experience.
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> Finally, whatever may be said about the utility and possibility of the proposal, it certainly does not seem necessary. Its advocates put forward two reasons for considering it so, one being to provide against dangerous errors in teaching, and the other to secure that unity of souls which our Father Ignatius so highly commended. Now soundness of doctrine is indeed to be preferred to every other advantage, but it would be provided for just as well if two lists were drawn up, the first containing certain opinions of St. Thomas which our Fathers should on no account be allowed to defend, and the second containing opinions more probable or less probable than those of the Saint, freedom of discussion being permitted only with regard to this second list. No danger could possibly be run from such discussion, for the opinions in question would be carefully defined and known to everybody. Unity of minds is to be desired, indeed, in the greatest measure possible of attainment, but in this life we can hardly aspire to a greater measure of it than is to be found in agreement on essentials. The Thomists themselves and the Scotists have many domestic battles, and one doctor among them is to be found belabouring another, even in printed books. As for us, our Father Ignatius of blessed memory did

not absolutely prescribe that we should all think and say the same thing, but that we should think and say the same thing *as far as we could*. Consequently, as perfect unity could not be obtained even if St. Thomas, the whole of St. Thomas, and nothing but St. Thomas were made the law amongst us, I am of opinion that he ought to be received as our ordinary and common authority, a few only of his views excepted. Robert Bellarmine, *salvo semper meliori judicio*.[1]

5. In September 1582 Aquaviva formulated six provisional rules on the choice of opinions in theology and the manner of teaching them, which were in close agreement with Bellarmine's suggestions.[2] Towards the end of the following year, he appointed six Fathers, each representing a separate country, to study the dossier already compiled and frame a scheme of studies which he apparently hoped might be final. They worked hard from December 1583 to the end of August 1584, and then presented the General with two drafts one speculative, *De opinionum delectu*, and the other of a practical nature, *De scholarum administratione*. These documents were at once dispatched to the various Provinces for criticism, and also submitted to six Fathers of the Roman College. When the committee thus appointed with Bellarmine as its secretary began to examine the draft on the choice of opinions, they discovered that the revisers, in their zeal for safety and uniformity of teaching, had drawn up an enormous catalogue of 597 propositions, taken chiefly from the *Summa* of St. Thomas. Of these some were set down as *definitae* or obligatory and the rest as *liberae* or optional. Unfortunately a great number of the obligatory propositions were quite contrary to the teaching of St. Thomas, and altogether nicely, though certainly not intentionally, calculated to give offence to St. Thomas's religious brethren. Bellarmine and his five colleagues criticized the catalogue severely, and gave six excellent reasons why such a large measure of dissent should not be permitted. It was against the Constitutions of the Society of Jesus for one thing. Moreover, 'the writings of St. Thomas had always enjoyed so much authority in the Catholic Church that Popes had declared him to be the safest of doctors, œcumenical Councils had often based their dogmatic defini-

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[1] Le Bachelet, *Bellarmin avant son Cardinalat*, pp. 505–509.

[2] These rules are given in Pachtler's *Ratio Studiorum et Institutiones scholasticae S.J. per Germaniam olim vigentes*, Berlin, 1887, vol. II, pp. 12–14. (*Monumenta Germaniae Paedagogica*, Band V.)

tions on his teaching, and nothing had ever been defined which was manifestly contrary to it.'[1]

At length, after the four years of inquiry and discussion, the first *Ratio Studiorum* was printed at Rome in 1586.[2] It was a private edition, intended only to facilitate further investigations by the multiplication of copies. These were at once dispatched to the various quarters of Europe and criticisms soon began to pour into Rome, directed for the most part against the proposed catalogues of obligatory and optional opinions.[3] When Bellarmine returned from France in November 1590, he found that nearly four hundred items of the objectionable list had been criticized out of existence. Two hundred and seven hardy articles had survived the storm, however, and on these he was asked once again to deliver judgment. In his answer he showed himself as before entirely opposed to definitions on a large scale: 'Censeo non esse definiendas propositiones nisi paucissimas easque solum ratione securitatis.' Such lists would prove an intolerable burden to professors, he said; they could never be drawn up so accurately as to leave no room for cavil; they would afford the Dominicans a legitimate grievance; no other religious order nor learned body, except the University of Paris, had favoured them, and the Paris definitions were the laughing-stock of all Europe; finally, they would probably be the seed of much grumbling and quarrelling in the Society of Jesus.[4]

The second version of the *Ratio* was printed in 1591, but it did not contain the double catalogue which had given rise to so much controversy. This was at the time in the hands of the Cardinals of the Holy Office who, wise men, refused to pronounce one way or the other, and sent it back with a pious hope that the General and his assistants 'would do their best to ensure that the Society's professors and masters might everywhere persevere unanimously in sound doctrine.'[5] The General then forwarded it to the various Provinces, and once more the mules of the Roman post had their backs weighed down with the resultant letters of criticism. The fifth general congregation of the Jesuits assembled on 3 November 1593.

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[1] Le Bachelet, *Bellarmin avant son Cardinalat*, pp. 509–511.

[2] This first edition became extremely rare and was hardly known at all until Pachtler printed it in Band v of the *Monumenta Germaniae Paedagogica*, pp. 25–217.

[3] Cf. de Scorraille, *François Suarez*, t. I, pp. 189–192.

[4] Le Bachelet, *Bellarmin avant son Cardinalat*, pp. 513–515.

[5] Le Bachelet, *l.c.*, p. 497, n. 1.

Bellarmine, then Rector of the Roman College, took a foremost part in the negotiations and was appointed president of the committee for dealing with the still unachieved scheme of studies. He and his eleven assistants soon solved the problem of the double catalogue by rejecting it altogether and substituting instead certain admirable rules which were eventually embodied both in the *Ratio* and the Institute of the Order. During the following years he remained at the head of affairs. Even while burdened with the Provincialate of Naples we find him summarizing and copying out reports with his own hand for the General's inspection. At long last, in 1598, the definitive edition of the *Ratio* appeared and became law in the Society of Jesus, where with slight modifications to meet modern requirements, it still remains the law.[1] In conclusion we may cite a few of its rules for which Bellarmine was directly responsible :

> *Regulae Provincialis*, 9a, § 2—He shall bear in mind particularly that none are to be made professors of theology except those well-affected towards St. Thomas. Men who differ from him, or study him but little, are not to be allowed to teach.
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> *Regulae Professoris Scholasticae Theologiae*, 2a—In scholastic theology our Fathers must keep entirely to the teaching of St. Thomas, hold him as their own special Doctor, and take every means to win for him the devotion of their pupils. This rule of adherence to St. Thomas, however, ought not to be interpreted as if it meant that the least divergence from his views was prohibited. Those who chiefly glory to call themselves Thomists sometimes dissent from him, and it would not be fair to bind the Society's professors to a stricter practice than even the Thomists follow.
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> *Regulae Professoris Philosophiae*, 6a—Let St. Thomas never be mentioned except in honourable terms ; let him be followed gladly [in philosophy] as often as is advisable, and should there be occasion to abandon any of his views, let this be done reverently and reluctantly.[2]

6. The same temperately critical spirit which dignified Father Robert's attitude to St. Thomas and the study of

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[1] Pachtler has printed the *Ratio* of 1598 alongside Father Roothaan's revision of 1832. *Monumenta Germaniae Paedagogica*, Band v, pp. 225–481.

[2] Pachtler, *l.c.*, pp. 238, 300, 331–332. In 1711 the Secretary of the Society of Jesus, Horatius Oliverius, attested officially that these rules had been drawn up by Bellarmine, and that the original manuscript of them, written in his own hand, was in the archives of the Order. This attestation was printed in the *Summarium additionale*, p. 25, and has been reprinted from the manuscript by Le Bachelet, *Bellarmin avant son Cardinalat*, pp. 516–517.

theology, is observable also in his work as a member of the commissions for the reform of the Martyrology and Breviary. In a memorandum of 1592 on the former subject, he advises that too much faith ought not to be put in the Greek Menologia 'quia Graeci valde faciles sunt in sanctis recipiendis et colendis,' and deprecates the inclusion in the Martyrology of men whose only title appeared to be their known presence at some ancient Council; 'Quid enim hoc ad sanctitatem facit?' Nor did he like the addition of so many saints from the Italian calendar: 'Spaniards, Frenchmen, Germans, and people of other nations,' he said, 'will be able to complain quite justly that though we want them to venerate our saints, we are not willing to venerate theirs.' His closing remark is the expression of a regret: 'Since the Martyrology has already been published by the order and sanction of Pope Gregory XIII, it would not be possible, perhaps, without grave scandal, to banish as many saints from it as I would like to see banished.'[1]

From the appearance in 1568 of St. Pius the Fifth's revised edition of the Breviary, Bellarmine had taken a particular interest in this branch of the Church's liturgy. It was the second nocturns which gave him most concern for he believed that the accounts of saints' lives set down there were often not as scrupulously accurate as they ought to have been. Writing to his friend Salmeron in 1584, he told him that he had composed a small dissertation on twenty big historical errors in those nocturns, and had made many efforts to have the criticism brought to the notice of the Pope. Unfortunately such business had to be transacted through Cardinal Sirleto, and Cardinal Sirleto was unsympathetic as he had himself been mainly responsible for the *Breviarium Pianum*. 'Piu vale la sua authorita, che le nostre ragioni,' said Robert ruefully,—his influence is worth more than our evidence.[2]

When Pope Clement VIII succeeded to the chair of St. Peter in 1592, one of his first acts was to appoint a commission for the further reform of the Breviary, consisting of Baronius as president, and six colleagues among whom was Bellarmine. The following ten years were devoted to investigations and consultations of various kinds, in all of which Father Robert took an active part. The general policy of the revisers was to make as few changes as possible, and to correct what had to be corrected in such an unobtrusive and tactful way as to give no cause for scandal or complaint. This was a very much more difficult task than might be imagined, for there were all sorts of prejudices, national and sentimental, which had to be placated. And *their* influence, too, proved stronger sometimes than Father Bellarmine's evidence. Some examples of the criticisms which he submitted will prove of interest. Certain antiphons appointed for the feast of the Finding of the Holy Cross displeased him. 'They have no sense in them,' he wrote bluntly, and they duly disappeared. St. Urban, Pope, is commemorated on May 25, and his Lesson in the Breviary of Pius V announced that he had reigned in the time of Marcus Aurelius.

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[1] *De Reformatione Martyrologii Romani*, written at the request of Cardinal Lauro, president of the Commission. *Auctarium Bellarminianum*, pp. 459–461. Pope Gregory's Martyrology appeared in 1584.

[2] Le Bachelet, *Bellarmin avant son Cardinalat*, pp. 142–143.

> Turn to the Lesson of St. Eleutherius on the following day [advised Bellarmine]. St. Eleutherius is there said to have reigned in the time of the Emperor Commodus who was the son of Marcus Aurelius, and yet we know that Eleutherius reigned before Urban, the order of the Popes being Eleutherius, Victor, Zepherinus, Callistus, Urban. It will not do to say that the Marcus Aurelius under whom Urban is placed was not the father of Commodus but a later person of the same name, for the Lessons of St. Cecilia (November 22) tell us that she suffered under Commodus and that Pope Urban was reigning in those days. Besides, according to Eusebius and other historians Urban did not succeed to the Primacy under anybody with the name of Marcus Aurelius, but under Alexander the brother of Heliogabalus.[1]

This piece of criticism brought to light a nice state of confusion in names and dates and the result of it was that we read in the Breviary now 'Urbanus Romanus *Alexandro Severo imperatore* . . .'

Father Robert's next sally is an amusing one about St. Petronilla, the supposed daughter of St. Peter, who is commemorated on May 31:

> What is said about St. Petronilla seems to me very doubtful indeed, for the story is taken from the Passion of St. Marcellus and we are there told that in the time of the Emperor Domitian a certain 'Count' Flaccus fell head over heels in love with her. Now in the time of Domitian the daughter of St. Peter could not have been less than fifty-four years old, and who will believe that anyone

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[1] This and the other examples are from a document entitled *Dubia quaedam de Historiis in Breviario Romano positis*. Le Bachelet, *Auctarium Bellarminianum*, pp. 461–466.

could have been so smitten by an old lady approaching her sixties? Besides there were no such things as Counts in those days.

As a consequence of this criticism St. Petronilla lost her Lesson altogether and is now merely commemorated (*de communi*) at Vespers and Lauds. Several other of Bellarmine's suggestions, particularly in the matter of chronology, were adopted, but two of his finest critical efforts were disregarded because national feelings might have been hurt. The legend of St. James the Greater in the Breviary of Pope Pius stated that the Apostle 'traversed Spain and preached the Gospel there, and afterwards returned to Jerusalem.'

> This is very doubtful [commented the critic], for perhaps there is not a single authority worthy of credit who vouches for it. It is true that Isidore narrates the story, if Isidore be really the author of the work ascribed to him, but then this narrative is full of silly concoctions. We are told, for instance, that James was buried in Carmarica, but where or what Carmarica may be, nobody knows. St. Paul himself is a witness against the story, for in the Epistle to the Romans he says that it was not his custom to preach the Gospel where others had already preached it, and then, a little later, that he is desirous of making a missionary journey into Spain. It is known that he wrote this epistle after the death of St. James.

These are but one or two of many sound objections which Bellarmine urged against the legend, and his reasoning moved the commissioners of Pope Clement to temper the statement in the Breviary of Pope Pius as follows: 'After a short time he [St. James] went into Spain and there made some converts to the faith, *according to the tradition of the Churches of that Province.*'[1] If anyone will turn to the second nocturn Lessons of July 25 in our present edition of the Breviary, he will discover that the italicized words, 'according to the tradition etc.' are missing, the clergy of Spain having protested so vigorously that Pope Urban VIII was obliged to omit them in his edition of 1631.[2]

Just as ill-founded as the journey of St. James, Father Robert considered, was the belief that the St. Denis venerated in Paris was Denis the Areopagite. His criticism of this identification is very detailed and entirely conclusive, but national sentiment was too strong for it also, and we still read on October 9 that 'Denis the Athenian, one of the judges of the Areopagus . . . believed in Christ . . . and was sent into France by Pope Clement to preach the faith'. Moreover, we are told that after his decapitation at Paris 'he took up his head and carried it in his hands for a distance of two miles.' Baronius, it must be said, did not show very much courage or enterprise in the execution of his task, for even when nobody's feelings were at stake, he opposed desirable changes. Bellarmine had proved quite satisfactorily that the False Decretals were false, and yet his Oratorian friend refused absolutely to touch the legends of the ancient Popes in the making of which these Decretals played an important part. 'Perhaps it would be better,' wrote the Jesuit, 'to narrate nothing at all about St. Catherine of Alexandria and to take her whole office from the Common of Virgins. Her story is full of uncertainties, and I wish we could be sure that inventions was not the right word.' Baronius admitted all this and yet passed the uncertainties or inventions on into our present Breviary. In justice to him, however, it must be admitted that his dear Bellarmine led him astray on one point. Father Robert himself tells the story with a certain amount of satisfaction, though he was quite wrong in his surmise:

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[1] Batiffol, *History of the Roman Breviary*, Eng. tr., 1912, p. 216.

[2] Cf. Bäumer, *Geschichte des Breviers*, Fribourg, 1895, B. II, p. 301.

> In one session of the Congregation for the reform of the Breviary I had an argument with Cardinal Baronius as to whether the letter describing the martyrdom of St. Andrew was really written by the priests of Achaia. Baronius denied that it was, but when he had heard my view and my reasons, he said publicly that he had lost his case, and was more satisfied with my opinion than with his own.[1]

He was too easily satisfied, for though the letter is still attributed to the priests of Achaia in the Breviary, it is quite certain that they had nothing to do with its composition.

Bellarmine made ample amends for this mistake by a beautiful contribution to the Breviary of 1602. A year or two before that date, Pope Clement was in quest of a hymn for the Vespers of St. Mary Magdalene's feast. The poet of the Curia in those days was Cardinal Antoniano, who had owed his first big rise in life to his gift for improvising verses.[2] Against him

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[1] *Autobiography*, num. xlvi.

[2] When Antoniano was a boy in Florence, Cardinal Pisani gave a birthday dinner to which several of his brethren in the purple were invited. He had the young verse-maker in to amuse his guests, and the praises of them all having been duly sung by the boy, Pisani put a wreath in his hands to place on the head of the one who should afterwards be Pope. Antoniano surveyed the laughing group for a moment and then gracefully crowned Cardinal Alexander de Medici. When the Cardinal later became Pius IV, he remembered the joke, and put the prophet of his greatness on the way to fortune. Cf. the *Month*, August 1874.

Clement determined to pit Bellarmine in a metrical contest, without disclosing to either the real object which he had in view. They were all three holidaying among the classic groves of Tusculum at the time, so the Pope's suggestion was welcomed in the proper holiday spirit and the rival poets set to work with schoolboyish keenness. St. Mary Magdalene was to be the subject of the verses, Clement was to be the judge whose decision must be considered final, and the prize was to be the glory of having won. Bellarmine got the prize with the following verses :

Pater superni luminis,
Cum Magdalenam respicis,
Flammas amoris excitas
Geluque solvis pectoris.

Amore currit saucia
Pedes beatos ungere,
Lavare fletu, tergere
Comis, et ore lambere.

Astare non timet cruci :
Sepulchro inhaeret anxia,
Truces nec horret milites :
Pellit timorem caritas.

O vera, Christe, caritas,
Tu nostra purga crimina,
Tu corda reple gratia,
Tu redde coeli praemia.

Patri, simulque Filio,
Tibique, Sancte Spiritus,
Sicut fuit, sit jugiter
Saeclum per omne gloria.
Amen.

Father of heavenly light, Thine Eyes
Have but on Magdalene to rest
And straight, the flames of love arise,
Melting the frost within her breast.

She runs, by wounded love made fleet ;
Showers kisses, pours out ointment rare,
And laves with tears those Blessed Feet ;
Then wipes them with her wealth of hair.

She dares to stand beneath the Cross,
Braving rough soldiers, and keep near
The empty tomb, to mourn her loss ;
For love, made perfect, casts out fear.

O Christ ! O very Love ! Efface
The sins wherewith our souls are scarred,
Fill us with sanctifying grace,
And grant us heaven for our reward.

Unto the Father and the Son
And, Holy Spirit, unto Thee,
As through the ages that have run
Be glory given eternally.
Amen.

This admirably restrained, devout, and simple hymn, which was written, its author says, ‘ rather as a joke than to be put in the Breviary,' is now read by all priests of the western Church on July 21 of each year. The perfection of its art may be tested by trying to substitute even a single word in place of one employed by Bellarmine.[1]

7. It was not only good methods in theology and sound scholarship in the Church's official literature which interested Father Robert. All his life long, from boyhood to advanced old age, he showed as much eager zeal for the Christian instruc-

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[1] ‘ Qui hymnus (de Sta. Maria Magdalena) compositus fuit Tusculi et a Clemente VIII antepositus hymno quem de re eadem scripsit Cardinalis Antonianus, et uterque nostrum quasi ex tempore scripsit, et joco magis, quam ut in Breviario poni deberent,' *Autobiography*, n. iii. The translation of the hymn is a new one by the Rev. Francis Devas, S.J.

tion of children and illiterates as he did for the maintenance of high standards in seminaries and universities. Indeed, he was one of the greatest, if not the very greatest, of the Church's 'catechists,' a very splendid company which numbers St. Gregory, St. Augustine, St. Cyril, Gerson, St. Peter Canisius, St. Charles Borromeo, St. Francis de Sales, St. Vincent de Paul, and a host of other famous men, in its ranks. It will be remembered that while he was delivering his profoundly learned lectures at the Collegio Romano, Bellarmine used also to give the lay-brothers of the house weekly instructions on Christian doctrine. These simple lessons were prepared with as much care as the *Disputationes de controversiis*, and their subsequent celebrity was to be hardly less great. Many, besides the lay-brothers, invited themselves to the instructions, so it soon got about in Rome that Bellarmine was as wonderful a catechist as controversialist. At the beginning of 1597, shortly after his return from Naples, he was entreated by Cardinal Tarugi to publish his method, and Pope Clement strongly supported the Oratorian's appeal.[1]

Father Robert set to work with such a will that before 1597 had passed the first of his two catechisms, the *Dottrina Cristiana breve* or compendium of Christian doctrine, was ready for distribution. During the following year, the complementary work appeared, a teacher's manual entitled *An explanation of Christian doctrine written in the form of a Dialogue, for the use of those who teach it to children and to other simple people.* The first of the two little works is the more interesting and with it we shall chiefly deal. It does not begin as does our Catechism: 'Who made you? God made me,' but leaving such profundities to grown-ups asks the completely intelligible question, 'Siete voi cristiano —are you a Christian?' and gives an answer which any child could repeat with conviction, 'Sono, per grazia di Dio—by the grace of God I am.' The teacher asks the questions in this Catechism but in the larger one the order is reversed and the pupil has that rôle. The opening sentences give the key to Bellarmine's method:

> *Pupil:* What are the chief and most necessary parts of Christian doctrine?
>
> *Teacher:* They are four, the Apostles' Creed, the Our Father, the Ten Commandments, and the Seven Sacraments.

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[1] For Cardinal Tarugi's request, cf. *Autobiography*, n. xxxi; for Pope Clement's order, *Epistolae familiares*, xxxvii, p. 86.

Pupil : Can you give me an illustration which will make clearer the necessity of these four parts of Christian doctrine ?

Teacher : St. Augustine draws a comparison from the building of a house. The first thing to do is to lay the foundations ; then to erect the walls and finally to cover it with the roof, for all of which work tools are necessary. So it is in building up the edifice of salvation in our own souls. We must lay the foundations of faith, erect the walls of hope and roof them over with charity, our tools being the most holy sacraments.

The whole of the Christian religion is thus made to centre round the three theological virtues, faith finding expression in the Apostles' Creed, hope in the Our Father and Hail Mary, and charity in the Commandments of God and the Church, and the sacraments. Bellarmine's idea in thus schematizing his questions and answers was to make them easier for little ones to learn by heart—*perchè si possa imparare a mente.* For the same reason he is as brief and pointed and practical as possible, leaving out such things as the Twelve Fruits of the Holy Ghost and the Eight Beatitudes, because, as he says in his introductory note, 'knowing them by heart is of little use to anybody and, besides, even learned men would be puzzled to repeat them in their right order.' [1]

A few specimens of the questions and answers in the Little Catechism may now be given to illustrate its author's careful, finely practical method :

Teacher : If someone goes to confession without sorrow or a purpose of amendment, does he receive pardon for his sins ?

Pupil : No, he does not, and if he dies in that state he will go to Hell for all eternity.

Teacher : If someone were to leave out a mortal sin in his confession, would that confession be a good one ?

Pupil : It depends. If he leaves it out through forgetfulness, the confession is good, but he is obliged to mention it at the next confession after it has returned to his memory. If, on the other hand, he leaves it out wilfully, or through shame, or because he neglected to examine his conscience, then he commits a sacrilege and none of his sins are forgiven.

Teacher : What must he do, then, who has made a bad confession in this way ?

Pupil : He must do three things. First, he must tell the sin which he has not confessed, mentioning expressly that he left it out through his own fault, either because he was a

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[1] *Opera Omnia,* Fèvre's ed., Paris, 1874, t. XII, p. 259.

> bad man or because he was ashamed or had not examined his conscience. Then he must repeat the other mortal sins which he previously confessed, and finally tell how often he has been to confession or communion since the time he left out that mortal sin.[1]

On the Holy Eucharist, Father Robert is equally to the point. Children very rarely have theological difficulties about Holy Communion, but they very often have practical difficulties and that is a matter which their elders are apt to forget. If a personal memory may be pardoned, the writer has vivid recollections of the misery he went through during the week before his first Communion because of his dread that the Sacred Host would adhere to the roof of his mouth. For some obscure reason, such as influence children, he did not like to ask anyone what to do in such a case, and spent many anxious hours searching the catechism and several prayer-books for a clue. At last, to his infinite relief, he found a hint, printed in very small type in some manual of devotion, and became so hilarious that he was threatened with having the great day postponed. Our English Catechism passes over this little matter in complete silence but Bellarmine did not forget it:

> *Teacher :* After having received the Sacred Host how long ought It to be kept in the mouth ?
> *Pupil :* It should be swallowed as soon as possible.
> *Teacher :* But suppose It becomes attached to the palate, what is to be done then ?
> *Pupil :* The communicant must try to remove It with his tongue but, on no account, with his fingers. If he cannot succeed with his tongue then he should take a mouthful of water or wine and swallow it with the Sacred Host.

One question in the Catechism, which was meant primarily for Italians, is terribly practical :

> *Teacher :* How long should one refrain from spitting on the ground after Holy Communion ?
> *Pupil :* If it can be managed, a quarter of an hour, but should some great need arise, then one ought to spit into a handkerchief out of reverence to the Blessed Sacrament.

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[1] The only reference to this important matter in the English Catechism is number 296 : 'What if a person wilfully conceal a mortal sin in confession ? If a person wilfully conceal a mortal sin in confession, he is guilty of a great sacrilege, by telling a lie to the Holy Ghost in making a bad confession.'

The following are a few typical extracts from the larger Catechism, the subject being the First Commandment:

Pupil: Would you explain to me how it is that the honour which we give to saints and their relics and images is not contrary to this Commandment, for we appear to adore them and pray to them as we do to God?

Teacher: Holy Church is the Bride of God and has the Spirit of God for her Guide. Consequently, there is no danger of her being deceived or doing or permitting anything contrary to God's Commandments. To come to the point, we honour and invoke the saints because they are the friends of God, and can help us by their merits and prayers to Him. But we do not account them gods, nor do our genuflexions signify any such thing. A genuflexion is not a mark of reverence peculiar to the service of God, for knees are bent also to persons of great dignity, such as the Pope and kings, and in many places religious men kneel before their superiors. It is not strange, then, that we should show such reverence to the saints reigning with Christ in Heaven since we show it to mortal men like ourselves, here on earth.

Pupil: Yes, but tell me why do we genuflect and pray to the *relics* of the saints, which are lifeless things and not persons?

Teacher: The answer is that we do *not* pray to them, knowing very well that they cannot hear us. But we honour them because they were the instruments by means of which the saints did so many good works, and because they will one day be living and glorious bodies again. To us now, they are, as it were, precious tokens of the love which the saints bore and bear towards us. That is why we pour out our prayers to the saints before their relics, begging them by these dear pledges which we hold, to remember to help us as we remember to do them honour.

Pupil: Is it possible to say the same about images?

Teacher: Yes, because images of Our Lord, Our Lady, and the saints, are not regarded by us as gods, but as mere representations which recall to our minds thoughts of those they represent. Thus they serve people who cannot read in place of books, teaching them many mysteries of our holy faith. The honour which we pay to them is not given because they are figures of paper, or wood, or stone, or metal, or because they are beautifully coloured and moulded, but because they represent Christ, His Mother, or the saints. Knowing as we do that the images are dead, undiscerning things, made by the hands of men, we do not ask anything from them, and pray before them only because they picture to our minds, Our Lord, Our Lady, and the saints, whom we are really addressing.

Pupil : When, then, we hear that someone gained a favour through the use of a relic or by praying before a statue, we are to understand that the prayer was really addressed to the saint whose relic or statue it was, and that God through the intercession of the saint and by means of the relic or statue granted the favour ?

Teacher : Exactly ; and I am delighted that you have understood so well what I have been trying to explain.

Pupil : One last question. I would like to know why God the Father is represented to us in pictures as an old man, the Holy Ghost as a dove, and the Angels as youths with wings. God and the Angels, we know, are spirits who have no bodies that can be painted as artists paint men.

Teacher : When God the Father is represented as an old man, the Holy Ghost as a dove, and the Angels as winged youths, this is not done because They are really like that. As you said, they are bodiless spirits. But They are given these forms because it was under such that They sometimes revealed Themselves to men. Thus God the Father is pictured as an old man because as an old man He appeared in vision to the prophet Daniel (*Dan., cap. vi*) ; the Holy Ghost is shown as a dove because it was in that form He appeared at the baptism of Our Lord (*John, cap. i*) ; and the Angels are represented as youths because they took that shape several times in the Old Testament (*Gen., cap. xviii-xix*). Also, you must know that pictures and statues are often intended to show us, not things as they are in themselves, but the qualities of things, or the effects which they produce. Thus Faith is represented as a lady with a chalice in her hand and Charity as a lady with children about her, though we know well that Faith and Charity are not women but virtues. So it is not inappropriate to say that God the Father is represented as an old man to teach us that He is ‘ the Ancient of days ’ or the Eternal, Who existed before the foundation of the world : that the Holy Spirit is represented as a dove to signify the gifts of innocence, purity, and holiness with which He endows our souls ; and that the Angels are represented as young men with wings because their strength and beauty never know decline, and they are always on tip-toe to do God’s bidding. Sometimes, too, we see them in white robes and sacred stoles, signifying their sinlessness and service of the Divine Majesty.[1]

8. As soon as the two Catechisms were ready, Pope Clement had them examined by a special Congregation, and then issued the following brief, dated Ferrara, 15 July 1598 :

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[1] *Opera Omnia*, XII, pp. 306–307.

Ad futuram rei memoriam

The pastoral solicitude of the Vicar of Christ must ever have for its chief concern the Catholic instruction of the little ones of Christ's fold, in order that true piety and the faithful observance of the Divine precepts may become every day more deeply rooted in their hearts. Accordingly, understanding that the several Catechisms, written by various persons and according to different methods, which are now in use, were giving rise to no little difficulty and confusion in both teaching and learning, we, desiring to remedy this evil, ordered our beloved son Rupert (*sic*) [1] Bellarmine, priest of the Society of Jesus, to write a new catechism, divided into two parts. This we then committed to our beloved sons, the Cardinals of the Congregation of the Reform, to be diligently examined, and on their approval commanded it to be printed and published, granting this privilege, of our own accord and after mature deliberation, to our beloved sons the Brothers of the Confraternity of Christian Doctrine in Rome, that henceforth there may be but one method in teaching and learning the Catechism.

Moreover, by the tenor of these presents, we concede and grant to the said Confraternity all rights over this work for a period of ten years, insomuch that no one in the Holy City or in any part of our ecclesiastical dominions may print or sell this or any other Catechism without leave from the officers of the same Confraternity, under pain of our displeasure and a fine of five hundred gold ducats. We hereby instruct our beloved sons, the Vicar General of Rome and his assistants, that they on no account permit the printing, publishing, or sale of any other Catechism except the one now approved, in the City or its environs ; and they must see to it that no other is used in the schools, both public and private, and in the churches. Further, we exhort, in the Lord, the Venerable Patriarchs, Archbishops, Bishops, Vicars-General, Abbots, Parish Priests, and all others whom it may concern, in every part of the world, to use their utmost endeavours to have this Catechism, written at our command, adopted and followed in their respective churches, dioceses, and parishes. . . .[2]

That was a very grand send off for the little book, but the welcome it received was still more remarkable. Two years after publication, it was translated into French, five years later into Polish, and then into more than sixty different tongues and dialects. In Italy it was printed in as many as twenty separate cities, Venice alone issuing it twelve times. There were sixteen editions in Arabic, nine in Spanish, four in Greek, thirteen in Polish, eighteen in French, two in English, four in German, seventeen in Latin, five in Maltese, three in Chaldean, five in Armenian, four in Albanian, five in Georgian, three in Portuguese, four in Flemish, and two each in Hungarian, Hindustani, Bulgarian, and Breton. In 1618 it appeared in Highland Scots and ten years later in Irish. Many of these editions, which number over four hundred all told, were reprinted again and again, and it was 'done into' the following tongues at least once: Basque, Bosnian, Chinese, Congolese, Coptic, Croatian, Ethiopian, Hebrew, Lithuanian, Persian, Peruvian, Russian, not to mention Bicolese, Birman, Bisayan, Heric, Malgachese, Marattan, Tagalese, Tinquan, and a dozen other dialects of which most people have never heard.[1] Indeed, with the exception of the Bible and the Imitation of Christ, it would be difficult to name any other book which went round the world so rapidly and became familiar to so many different races.

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[1] This is not the only time that Father Robert is christened Rupert in old documents. It is certainly wrong, and shows only the airy unconcern of the sixteenth century for accurate spelling. When the question ' What's in a name ? ' was first asked it had a good deal more point than it has now. The sixteenth-century man took shots at the proper names that he had to put in his manuscript and provided the sound was more or less all right, he did not worry about the spelling.

[2] *Summarium additionale*, num. 6, pp. 44–45.

St. Francis de Sales would permit no other Catechism in his diocese. In 1633 Pope Urban VIII strongly recommended its use in the mission field; in 1742, Benedict XIV addressed a special constitution to all the bishops of the Catholic Church advising its adoption as the official manual of every diocese, and in 1903 Leo XIII renewed the approbation and praise of his predecessors. Pope Pius IX submitted a short *schema* to the Fathers of the Vatican Council in which a remedy was proposed for the many grave inconveniences arising out of the multiplicity of catechisms then in use. The Holy Father announced that he intended, if the project met with the Council's approval, to have a new catechism drawn up 'ad exemplar proposito parvo Catechismo a Ven. Card. Bellarmino, jussu hujus S. Sedis, exarato.' The Patriarchs, Archbishops and Bishops of the Church would then see that it was carefully translated into the languages of their various countries, and employed to the exclusion of all other catechisms. Forty-one of the Fathers took part in the subsequent debates on the proposal, Mgr. Dupanloup and a few others going into opposition straight away on the ground that episcopal rights were at stake.

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[1] Sommervogel, *Bibliothèque de la Compagnie de Jésus*, tome I (1890), coll. 1182–1204. St. Peter Canisius's famous Catechism was translated into twenty languages, a third of Bellarmine's number.

Though the majority of the speakers supported the *schema*, the opposition party argued with such heat and eloquence that the presidents decided it must be modified a little to satisfy them. In the new version, bishops were to be allowed to add whatever they considered advisable to the text of the proposed catechism, and other manuals besides that of Bellarmine were to be used as models in its composition. This time the measure was passed by an overwhelming majority, 491 votes against 56, but there was still much disagreement about points of detail, and it soon became evident that years not days would be needed if every aspect of the question was to receive adequate consideration. The Council had too many other matters to deal with, and so came to an end before having decided whether a catechism based principally on Bellarmine's *Dottrina Cristiana* should be made obligatory throughout the Catholic world. That his little work should have been proposed as a model at all, after nearly three centuries of catechetical experience and experiments, is sufficient evidence of the genius that went to its making.[1]

9. Its history, however, was not 'roses, roses, all the way.' In the second half of the eighteenth century, the larger Catechism or *Dichiarazione* was found by the Emperor Joseph II and his minister Kaunitz to stand in the way of the ecclesiastical reforms on which they had set their hearts. Both men had been deeply influenced by the French 'Enlightenment.' Kaunitz was a personal friend of Voltaire and had had Rousseau for some time as his secretary, while the Emperor's model and hero was Frederick the Great. Their policy was to set up a national church which should be independent of Rome and in everything subservient to the State, but to realize this ideal thoroughly and peaceably, they knew that they must first wean the masses from their traditional loyalty to the Holy See. That loyalty had been fostered for generations in the hearts of Lombard children by Bellarmine's larger Catechism, which told them that they were not Catholics

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[1] The project of a universal catechism will probably revive when the Vatican Council meets again. The debates at the first meeting are extremely interesting. A very good account of them is given in two articles in *Stimmen aus Maria-Laach*, 1899, B. LVII, ss. 379–398: 1904, B. LXII, ss. 121–142. The references to Bellarmine will be found in the *Acta et Decreta*, 'Collectio Lacensis,' t. VII, coll. 663b, 665a, 666a.d, 1744d.

because they were born Italians or Frenchmen, nor because they were baptized, nor because they confessed Christ and His revelation, but because they were obedient to the Pope, the Vicar of Christ, and recognized and held him for their supreme religious ruler on earth.[1]

If 'Josephinism' was to succeed, such teaching must obviously end, and an opportunity for its suppression seemed to present itself in 1768 when the printers of Pavia asked leave from the Government to re-issue the Catechism. The Royal censor immediately set to work and cancelled or changed all the passages contrary to the Gallican and Jansenist ideas then prevalent in the Austrian dominions. As soon as the general public became aware of the plan, they organized meetings of protest on every side. The newspapers supported the censor, but the Bishop of Pavia stood firm and refused to sanction the mutilated Catechism. Very soon all Lombardy was ringing with the controversy, and so great was the opposition to the design of Kaunitz and his satellites, that they were compelled reluctantly to leave Bellarmine's text alone. Count Firmian, Kaunitz's representative and right-hand man at Milan, then suggested another expedient, to the effect that the smaller Catechism should be let pass, but that instead of the larger one a catechism recently composed by the celebrated Dominican Bishop of Ossory, Thomas Burke, should be introduced. Kaunitz wrote back lamenting the influence of Bellarmine's Catechism, 'qual classico nella Dottrina Dogmatica,' and doubting very much whether any rival manual would succeed in ousting it from the people's affections. He himself was in favour of the Catechism of Mgr. Colbert, Bishop of Montpellier, but as this work had been put on the Index, it would probably receive a very poor welcome from the people and their pastors. At length it was decided that a certain learned State official named Leporini should write an entirely new Catechism, emphasizing particularly the duties of citizenship, and touching as lightly as possible on such dogmas as did not fit in with Jansenism and Josephinism. When this work was submitted to the Cardinal Archbishop of Milan for his approval, he discovered that it was merely a hotch-potch of three earlier catechisms which had all been put on the Index. Naturally he refused to sanction it, and then Kaunitz, in revenge, issued an edict proscribing both of Bellarmine's Catechisms throughout Lombardy. It was another laurel in Blessed Robert's crown to have suffered from such enemies.[1]

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[1] *Opera Omnia*, XII, p. 293.

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[1] On this matter see two very interesting articles, based on unpublished manuscripts, in *La Civiltà Cattolica*, 7 March 1925, pp. 403–415 ; 21 March 1925, pp. 516–522.

CHAPTER XVII

CARDINAL BELLARMINE

1. As the Lent of 1599 advanced, rumours of a fresh creation of Cardinals began to spread at the Vatican, and soon there was betting on the event in the back streets of Rome. Bellarmine was a hot favourite, though the Pope had given no definite hint of his intentions in his regard and seemed indeed to take pleasure in mystifying all curious inquirers. Somebody had asked him point blank during the stay in Ferrara whether he did not consider Bellarmine deserving of a red hat. 'Oh yes,' answered Clement off-handedly, 'but then, you see, he's a Jesuit.'[1] In spite of such contrary indications, the Romans became convinced that he would be promoted. Father Robert, frightened at the persistency of the rumour, wrote to Aquaviva in the small hours of a chilly March morning, begging him of his charity to come to the rescue. He offered to go himself to the Pope, if the General approved, and words not availing, to compel the tender-hearted, rightly named Clement with his tears. Even should suspicion be cast on him of seeking the very honour which he was pretending to decline, he would shoulder it gladly.[2] Aquaviva did not approve, and the very next morning, March 3, a Consistory was held in which the Pope, after announcing Bellarmine's, name, declared: 'We elect this man because he has not his equal for learning in the Church of God and because he is the nephew of good Pope Marcellus.'[3] It might be wondered

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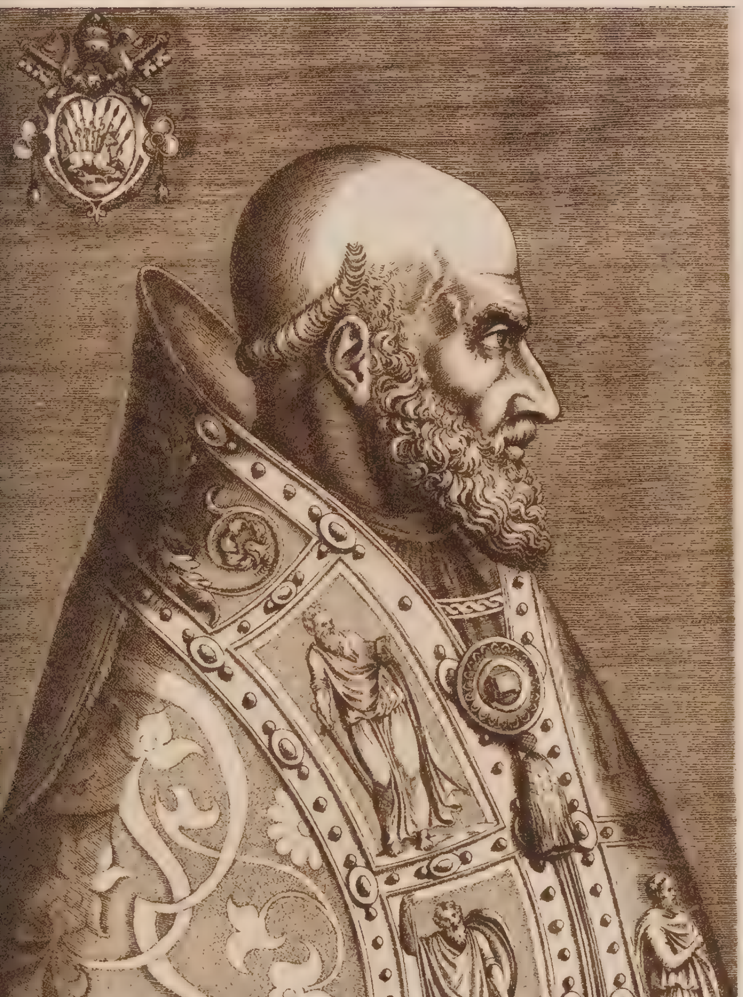
[1] *Autobiography*, n. xxxiii.

[2] Fuligatti, *Vita*, pp. 124–125.

[3] Evidence of Cardinal Bandino, who had himself urged Bellarmine's promotion on the Pope and was present at the Consistory. *Summarium*, num. 28, p. 81. Speaking of Bellarmine's elevation, d'Ossat wrote as follows from Rome to M. de Villeroy, 23 March 1599: 'Le Cardinal Bellarmino est celui qui a fait cet oeuvre incomparable des Controverses pour la Religion Catholique . . . et N.S. Père le faisant Cardinal a voulu honorer tant la vertu, et doctrine, et labeur de ce personnage, que le College des Cardinaux.' *Lettres du Cardinal d'Ossat*, 1732, t. III, pp. 302–303.


MARCELLVS . II . PAPA . POLITIANENSIS TVSCVS.

From Panvini's XXVII PONTIFICUM ELOGIA ET IMAGINES,
ROMAE MDLXVIII.

what good Pope Marcellus, forty-four years in his grave, had to do with the matter. The answer is an extract from the turbulent chronicles of Florence. Clement's father, Sylvester Aldobrandini, had been banished from that city nearly half a century earlier, and in the hour of his distress had found a friend in Marcello, who made him a senator of the City of Rome. The son had a long and faithful memory.

Bellarmine's friend and first biographer Fuligatti, as well as a secular priest named Jacobelli who had been in Blessed Robert's service for twenty-two years, have left interesting accounts of what happened after his nomination. An important Vatican official, the Marquis Sannesio, brought the news to the Penitenzieria, announcing at the same time, like a police constable, that the nominee was not to leave the house on any account until he received permission from the Pope. Father Robert, grievously troubled, answered that he could not accept the honour without first informing his Father General. The Marquis bowed and retired, and then the Rector summoned his community to a council of war. What was to be done? After some anxious moments the oldest Father present, a man named Costa, shook his wise, grey head and quoted an Italian proverb, *Cosa fatta non ammetter consiglio*—advice will not undo a thing that is done. The other Fathers agreed that there was no help, but Bellarmine still held out and sent a friend to beg Cardinal Aldobrandini that he might at least be allowed to go and plead his cause with the Pope. Aldobrandini replied that his Holiness could not see him and did not want arguments but obedience. Poor Father Robert, thinking of the 'dolce quiete' to which his soul had been so long wedded, lamented the divorce in the words of Noemi, used by St. Gregory on a like occasion: *Nolite vocare me Noemi, sed vocate me Mara quia amaritudine replevit me Dominus* (Ruth i, 20).[1] In a short time Sannesio came back for his prisoner, who was then conducted with the other cardinals-elect to the apartments in the Vatican where they were to be prepared for the reception of the hat. Eight years after Bellarmine's death an eye-witness gave his recollections of the scene to the then General of the Society of Jesus, Mutius Vitelleschi:

> 'While all the others were busy getting their tonsures shaved and making themselves ready, the good Father alone remained

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[1] *Summarium*, n. 7, p. 8; Fuligatti, *Vita*, pp. 125–126; *Autobiography*, n. xxxiii.

perfectly still, nor could anyone induce him to put on his robes until at last Cardinal Aldobrandini came down from the Pope's apartments. The Father ran up to him immediately and began to implore him most earnestly to let him stay as he was. I did not catch the remainder of his words, but I noticed the passionate entreaty of his face and I heard the answer he was given, namely, that the Holy Father ordered him, in virtue of holy obedience and, if I remember rightly, under pain of mortal sin, to make no further resistance. On this he instantly submitted but burst into a great flood of tears.[1] During the whole time he was having his tonsure shaved, and while behind a couch he was putting off his ordinary dress to assume the purple of the cardinalate, he continued to weep so bitterly that no matter what misfortune had befallen him I do not think it would have been possible to show greater signs of sorrow.[2]

Thus all in tears, he was taken to the Pope to receive the honour against which they were such a touching protest. Forgetful in his grief of the stern injunction that had been laid on him, he ventured to make a fresh appeal to the Holy Father, but was cut short unmercifully: 'I command you,' said Clement, 'in virtue of holy obedience and under pain of mortal sin to accept the dignity of Cardinal.'[3]

Three days later, March 6, Aquaviva addressed the following letter to the heads of the various Jesuit provinces:

> Your Reverence will probably have learned through another channel that God our Lord has brought about the promotion of Father Robert Bellarmine to the cardinalate. Yet I think it advisable to give you some further details about the matter, for the full story will help to lighten the despondency which such an occurrence is bound to cause us of the Society, who in the spirit of our Institute desire only that God may keep us in the lowliness we have chosen. Be it known to your Reverence, then, that not only did the Society urge seriously on the Pope every motive which our constitutions put forward against the acceptance of dignities, but also that Father Bellarmine himself endeavoured again and again to dissuade him, making evident that his one desire was to live and die as a simple religious. But his Holiness, avowing that he had given the matter mature consideration before God, would

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[1] 'Proruppe in un pianto dirottissimo.'

[2] 'Tutto quel tempo seguitò a gittare un profluvio di lagrime tanto grande che per qualsivoglia rovina che fosse sopragiunta a chi che sia, non so che si fosse potuto aspettare sentimento di dolor maggiore di questo.' Mgr. Odoardo Santerelli, Majordomo of Cardinal Aldobrandini, to Mutius Vitelleschi, 24 August 1629. Bartoli, *Vita*, pp. 184–185.

[3] *Autobiography*, num. xxxiii. Bellarmine must have been a superb actor on the hypothesis of Buschbell and Baumgarten!

not listen to the Father's reasons. When he attempted to urge them once again, just before receiving the biretta, the Pope commanded him in severe tones to accept the dignity and to make no further protest, under pain of excommunication *latae sententiae*.

I wanted to tell your Reverence all this that both you and your subjects may be gladdened, knowing that neither the Society nor his Illustrious Lordship failed to do all that was proper under the circumstances. In view of this we can hope that God our Lord will be glorified in his promotion, for as the dignity has been thus spontaneously conferred by the Pope on one adorned with the learning, integrity, and saintliness of Father Bellarmine, we have reason to expect that he will be in Holy Church, a model Cardinal, devoted to the public good, and as friendly to the Society as his long record of faithful service in it promised. To conclude, that God may grant him abundant grace in the performance of his new duties each priest in your province will say one Mass, and those who are not priests one pair of beads for his Lordship. From Rome, 6 March 1599.[1]

2. The Pope had set aside apartments in the Vatican, called the *Stanze del Paradiso*, for the new Cardinal's accommodation, a good suite overlooking a pleasant colonnaded court, where there were shady trees and a plashing fountain to make the summer heats bearable. The same generous hand also presented him with four sets of robes, purple and scarlet, which was three more, the recipient said, than the Gospel allowed. Of these he took such care that they lasted till his death, twenty-two years afterwards, the cuffs only having been renewed when the old ones were past all patching.[2] He had no silks in his possession, and all his garments were made of wool except a cassock of the silvery stuff called *teletta*, which he reserved for very special occasions such as the visits of ambassadors or princes.[3] Pope Clement wished him to buy a pair of horses, and his coachman was instructed by the Vatican officials to bring two very fine ones for his inspection. This good *cocchiere* knew a noble beast when he set eyes on it, and did his very best to persuade the Cardinal to secure the pair. When he asked the price he was told that it was 600 scudi, but that that need not worry him because the Pope would pay. 'Well,' said Bellarmine, 'if horses at half that price will carry me just as well as these, I do not

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[1] Fuligatti, *Vita*, pp. 129–131.

[2] Bartoli, *Vita*, pp. 393–394.

[3] Process of Montepulciano, p. 91; Bartoli, pp. 393–394.

see why 300 scudi of the Pope's money should go on mere show. Buy me a cheaper pair.'[1]

He might have been as wealthy as heart could desire by merely nodding his head, for Cardinal Sfondrato pressed several thousand scudi upon him, and the Spanish Ambassador proffered him a rich pension in the name of King Philip III. Others came forward too, but he courteously refused all offers and would have nothing beyond the usual allowance given by the Pope to poor cardinals.[2] Clement was the soul of generosity, but Bellarmine would not suffer him to be the judge of what was needful in his case. For his *Maestro di Casa* he chose a man named Peter Guidotti whom he knew well and trusted implicitly. Peter was given complete control and, at the same time, a very serious reminder that the money was not Bellarmine's but the Pope's, so if he wasted it on superfluities he would be responsible before God. Not content with these precautions, he sought the advice of his former superiors and expressed a great wish to have a Jesuit lay-brother to live with him, whom, however, he only obtained on loan for a short period.[3] He was determined to remain a Jesuit as much as he possibly could in the external trappings of his life, as well as in his daily routine, and to make sure of this, he submitted a detailed account of his household for the General's inspection. After the Cardinal's death his confessor Rocca showed this report to Fuligatti, from whose pages we borrow it :

> 1°. As to diet, clothing, prayer, Mass, and similar matters, there is scarcely any change.
>
> 2°. As to my household, it consists of thirty-five persons : eight or ten would be enough but one is expected to live up to the conventions. Of this staff, ten are gentlemen in waiting, fifteen are ordinary servants, and the rest servants of the ten gentlemen.
>
> 3°. I have three carriages because a horse often gets sick and it is not easy to secure a suitable one in its place at short notice. Yet I must always have two carriages in readiness, for that is the least number that will accommodate my suite when we have to go to public functions.

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[1] Roman Process, 1622, pp. 152, 171 ; Bartoli, *Vita*, p. 394.
[2] Bartoli, *l.c.*, p. 391.
[3] *Summarium*, n. 29, p. 108.

4°. The furniture of the house is scanty enough. There is no plate, with the exception of a few candlesticks, a ewer and jug, and some forks and spoons. The chairs are covered with leather, three summer apartments are upholstered in the same material, and two of them in winter are hung with old tapestries of little value.

5°. My income goes principally in feeding the household, paying wages and rent, and in clothing the servants. I also give a little to my poor relatives to relieve their greater needs. Anything that is left goes in alms or to the support of churches, and not a farthing is put by.[1]

Letters of congratulation soon began to pour in from all sides, and the humble subject of their praises hardly knew what to say in reply. To Justus Lipsius, the famous classical scholar, he wrote :

> I thank you very heartily for your kindness, and I excuse your mistake. Believe me, the only feeling I have about my elevation is one of anxiety and fright at the extreme danger in which it has placed me.[2]

Father Antony Talpa, the friendly Rector of the Oratory of Naples, was answered in similar terms :

> Your Reverence speaks and writes according to the dictates of that holy charity which thinks well of all and explains everything in a favourable light. But I who know only too well my many imperfections feel that I have exposed to danger my peace of soul and my surety of salvation. And so, even though I did this not freely but constrained by him whom it was my duty to obey, I cannot remain as I am, save very much against my own will. My Lord Cardinal Baronius, dearest of friends, professes himself mightily pleased, but I believe the reason is to be found in that Latin tag—*Solatium est miseris socios habere poenarum.*[3] Have compassion on me, you who enjoy the peace of holy contemplation, and pray to Our Lord for me that the cloud of human glory may not obscure my vision of Him, the true Sun. I commend myself to all in your holy house and to each one in particular, for I hold all of your Congregation to be no less my dear brothers than the members of the Society of Jesus.[4]

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[1] Fuligatti, *Vita*, pp. 152–153.
[2] *Epistolae familiares*, ii, p. 8.
[3] 'It is a comfort to the afflicted to have companions in misery.'
[4] Marciano, *Memorie della Congregazione dell'Oratorio*, vol. II, p. 45.

Cardinal Valier, the most delighted and enthusiastic of all the well-wishers, had two letters for himself, the second of which ran:

> These things are wonderful and great, if we cleave to earth and forget our true country. But if we judge aright, like good scholars of the school of Christ, if we have studied with attention the Gospels and St. Paul, if we seriously consider ourselves strangers and pilgrims on earth, what are all these things but a cloud that appeareth for a little time, and what is our life but grass, and what is its glory but a flower of the field? I, certainly, dearest Father, can make this confession to your paternal heart that I have never set any value on the purple, and now, so far from valuing it, I rather marvel greatly at those who do. I pity them too, for they seem not to care for the glory of the Eternal King if only they may gain some fleeting, counterfeit honours and the shadow of renown.[1]

Bellarmine could pour out his heart to people who, he knew, would understand. With others he was laconic and matter-of-fact, his excitable brother Thomas, for instance, getting only a few lines of notification:

> Rome, 3 March 1599. My dear, distinguished Brother. The new promotion of Cardinals was kept such a close secret that, though there were some plain indications that it was likely, I had no certain knowledge until this very morning when the consistory was held. It has now pleased God to raise me to this dignity, and I hope it will be to His glory. Signor Giuseppe can come to Rome as soon as he cares, but I should like Bartoletto and the rest of our relatives to stay away for the present, as is only fitting. My best of wishes. I have now to go to the Vatican for the biretta.[2]

Thomas had his heart's desire at last, and distributed alms with princely generosity. He also begged prayers in many religious houses for the new Cardinal, prayers with the significant twist, 'that God, the Author of his greatness would give it the completion which the world desired,' by which he undoubtedly meant the Papacy.[3] Montepulciano kept high festival in honour of the event, but it was not the only place gay with bonfires and bunting. It will be remembered that Bellarmine when Provincial of Naples had paid a visit to Taverna in Calabria. The following short narrative of an eye-witness will show what kind of impression he left on the people. As soon as they heard of his promotion to the sacred College they proclaimed a sort of public triduum of rejoicing during which all the churches and religious houses were magnificently illuminated. The villages round about vied with the town to see which could produce the finest bonfires and the biggest show of candles in domestic windows. Besides this, there were grand processions through the streets during which the *Te Deum* was sung and the crowds shouted heartily at each break in the music, 'Viva Gesù e Bellarmino!'[1]

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[1] Letter of 1 May 1599, published in Bartoli, *Vita*, p. 439.
[2] Le Bachelet, *Bellarmin avant son Cardinalat*, p. 435.
[3] Fuligatti, *Vita*, p. 131.

At Rome too there were celebrations, for though Bellarmine's religious brethren had been, like himself, distressed at the original proposal to make him a cardinal, they could not but feel, after the event, that his exaltation reflected glory on their Order. Accordingly the superiors of the Roman College decided to fête him with the usual round of poems and compositions, and begged him to be present at their little soirée on the Feast of the Annunciation. He said that he would come with pleasure provided the poets confined their muse to one theme, namely, 'All flesh is grass and all the glory thereof as the flower of the field.'[2] That was to put a hobble on Pegasus, but in spite of it, one at least of the panegyrists achieved a notable flight:

> Romulus hanc urbem posuit, nunc Romulus ornat,
> Purpureus merito, non nece. Verus honor.
> Et tamen exclamat: *Foenum omnia.* Disce, Quirine,
> Spernere non spargi; sanctior augur eris.[3]

3. Now it is time to study our Cardinal in the prosaic light of each common day when the world and its pomp left him alone. He was installed at the Vatican, as we have seen, that Vatican of Clement VIII which Bentivoglio, then a young *cameriere* at Court, sketched so vividly in his Memoirs, telling of all the men, mighty or of no account, who passed in the pageant, from the Pope himself down to the little Polish dwarf Adumo. His Holiness comes in to dinner, grave and care-worn, but in a minute he is laughing heartily for the dwarf is up to some trick, and the poet laureate Giulio Cesare, who takes his office seriously, is in a rage. That is one little

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[1] Letter of John Peter Calefati of Taverna, quoted by Fuligatti, *Vita*, p. 131.

[2] Fuligatti, *Vita*, p. 140.

[3] Quoted by Père Le Bachelet from a Roman MS. *Gregorianum*, December 1924, p. 506. It will be remembered that Bellarmine's third baptismal name was Romulus, and it will not be forgotten that the first Romulus murdered his brother Remus, according to the legend.

picture, and another, also of a group of three, runs thus: 'Truly Apostolic was the simplicity of their lives and the quietness of all their behaviour. The modesty and humility that had clothed them before they were Cardinals shone out now through the purple they wore.'[1] Those three men were the Pope's pensioners, Antoniano, Baronius, and Bellarmine.

The following details about the last of the three are strung together almost entirely in the words of men who were his familiars upon earth. 'I who was his servant for seven or eight years,' says one, 'know that as a Cardinal he never changed the manner of life which he had followed when a Jesuit.'[2] Six hours sleep was the most that he allowed himself, and in order that he might wake in good time without troubling any one to call him, he accepted a present of a round clock, a little bigger than a piastra, which had an alarm attached to it.[3] He would never buy any such thing for his own convenience. After rising, he put on unattended only his underclothing, and a heavy cloak or a cassock according to the season. Then he immediately said Matins and Lauds, either on his knees or, during Paschal time, standing. When they were finished, he put out his lamp and made an hour of meditation in the dark and at the end rose from his knees to open the shutters and let in the light of dawn. This done, he returned to his prie-dieu to say Prime, and afterwards retired to a back room that he might perform his ablutions and comb his hair. We next helped him to put on his robes but not a word was spoken. Once again he went on his knees to say Terce, and then Mass followed, with thanksgiving and Sext at the foot of the Altar. After this he was ready to receive anyone who desired to speak with him.

As soon as his last visitor had departed, he went straight to his carriage and drove off to whatever function required his presence. There was usually some function every morning. On his return home, he at once put aside his robes and began his midday prayer. Then dinner was served, his first meal of the day, after which he knelt down to say None. None was followed by half an hour of recreation which consisted in walking up and down saying the Rosary. It was then time for study, or rather for writing, and it was thus he spent every vacant moment without wasting a single one. As evening approached he recited Vespers and then, after the Ave Maria bell, said the Litanies of the Saints in the chapel with all his household. The Office ended at sunset with Compline, but his prayers did not end, for after supper he walked up and down saying the Rosary once more. Every day of his life, as soon as he had finished Compline he began the Office of Our Lady and when that was over, the Office of the Dead. So tranquilly did he sleep that he used to tell me neither distracting thoughts, nor heat nor cold ever disturbed his rest.[1]

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[1] *Memorie Storiche*, Opere, t. v, lib. I, c. ix.

[2] *Summarium*, n. 7, §§ 6–7.

[3] 'Che sonava,' *L.c.*, n. 29, p. 101 : n. 7, § 8 ; Fuligatti, *Vita*, p. 289.

We are assured that the order of the day, just described, was so regular that important people, such as cooks and chaplains, had never to inquire when their master would be in or out or want to see them. He was himself a living clock, and this 'horologiosity' was particularly noticeable in his method of reciting the Breviary. He might have been a choir monk, so careful was he to say each hour at the canonical time, whenever it was in his power to do so, and as for the other rubrics and ceremonies, we are given the sesquipedalian adverb 'esquisitissimamente' to tell us how he observed them.[2] On the rare mornings when he was not obliged to go out he was at everybody's disposal and never once refused to see a visitor. Still, no matter who was with him, when the time for Office came he would beg with great courtesy to be excused for a little while, begin the canonical hour, and return to his visitor when it was over. Even Cardinal Peter Aldobrandini, the greatest man in Rome after the Pope, had to wait. 'I watched him,' this man related, 'and he remained as still as a statue until he had finished his prayer.'[3] All the small vacant spaces of his day were thus crammed with God. *In Deo manebat*, *Deo inhaerebat*, *in Deo sedem habebat*, wrote one who knew him thoroughly.[4]

He was nearly always the first to arrive at the Vatican for the various functions and meetings, the reason for his hurry being that he was most anxious never to keep the others waiting as 'he thought himself to be the least of them all.' The journeys to and fro were spent almost entirely in prayer—*il suo andare era un continuo orare*—and when the morning's business was over or interrupted for a while the officials present often noticed him stealing away to a quiet corner to spend a little time with God.[1] Even when carrying on a conversation he would be seen now and then to close his eyes for a few intense seconds of prayer, and when studying or writing he was very frequently observed to cover his face with his hands and remain perfectly still for a quarter of an hour on end.[2] His steward Vignanesi, who watched him closely, testified thus emphatically to the episcopal notaries:

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[1] This is practically all Vignanesi's evidence. Vignanesi was his Maestro di Camera. *Summarium*, n. 7, pp. 6–7. Other details are from the *Imago* of Marcello Cervini who lived for ten years under the same roof as the Cardinal (p. 24).

[2] *Summarium*, n. 23, §§ 17–20.

[3] Fuligatti, *Vita*, pp. 289, 290.

[4] Cervini, *Imago*, p. 71.

> I know that apart from his studies and writing he spent nearly every minute of his time in prayer. And how do I know this? Because, your Lordships, I spied on him and saw it with my own eyes. Many a time during his half-hour of recreation, when he used to say the Beads, I have found him all rapt out of himself, as it were in ecstasy, so that though now and then he was repeating the Hail Marys in a loud voice, he neither saw nor heard me no matter how close to him I came nor how hard I shouted. At the slightest touch, however, a tremor like that of a frightened child passed over him and he was himself again.[3]

4. This habitual intimacy with God bred in Blessed Robert's heart the tenderest compassion for the needs and sorrows of his fellow-men. He had not long been a Cardinal when he was christened in the Roman slums 'il Padre de' Poveri,' and that affectionate title clung to him with ever-increasing appropriateness to the day of his death.[4] His house became the haunt of all the 'down-and-outs' in the city, who crowded daily about its doors and invaded the stairs and his very room. Sometimes on coming back from business he would find as many as three hundred awaiting him, and then he would rub his hands with delight and say to his distracted almoner, Peter Guidotti: 'These are the people, Peter, who will land us in Heaven.'[5] He refused to have any fixed hours for visitors and insisted that they must be admitted at all hours. If he happened to be writing when someone was announced,

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[1] *Summarium*, n. 10, p. 20: n. 28, p. 95; Roman Process, 1622, p. 109.

[2] Roman Process, 1622, p. 109; quoted Process of 1828, p. 188.

[3] *Summarium*, n. 24, p. 54—' dando un tremore come un bambino che pigli paura.'

[4] Joseph Finali's evidence, p. 8; Process of 1828 (Card. Zurla), p. 196.

[5] Roman Process, 1622, p. 87; Bartoli, *Vita*, p. 356.

his pen would stop poised in the middle of a word that he might welcome the caller instantly.[1] No discrimination whatever was made, and a beggar in rags was as often seated in his chair as a cardinal in purple.

His methods would undoubtedly shock a charity commissioner or a member of a society for the improvement of the lower classes. Once each month, he and his majordomo Guidotti went carefully through the household accounts together. If any surplus was discovered, Bellarmine in great delight—*tutto allegro*—got down a book in which the names of various poor families and individuals were registered with details of their position and needs, and on them the surplus was straightway expended. Similarly, on the 31st of each December there was a review of the year's finances and the indigent soon discovered that then was the time of times to put in their claims, for all that was in hand was at once distributed.[2] The good Cardinal even ran into debt for his poor, and he told Father Cepari that he hoped he would die soon after Christmas when his salary was paid, for otherwise he would certainly leave creditors behind him. His standing orders to his Maestro di Casa, according to this man's own account, were: 'Be as close-fisted as possible with me, but as open-handed as you can to the poor.' Guidotti must, indeed, have often been driven to despair by the incorrigible generosity of his master. What was a good business man to do with an employer who declared openly that every penny over when necessary expenses had been paid, belonged, not in charity but in strict justice, to the poor; who held that no one really possessed property which they did not give in alms, for such property only was entailed beyond the grave; and who reckoned no alms to be worth the name which did not cost its giver some positive inconvenience? Many and great were the arguments between the master's charity and the prudence of his man. When Peter had said his say, Bellarmine would answer with a laugh 'O my Peter of little faith, what have you done with Our Lord's *Nolite cogitare de crastino* and His *Date et dabitur vobis*?'[3]

Countless stories are told of the devices of his charity. One bitter winter's night he insisted that some hangings of red serge which Guidotti had bought the previous year, should be taken down and given for clothing to the ragged urchins in the street. ‘The walls won't catch cold,’ he said.[1] He could not bear to see covers or curtains about the house when there were many poor wretches shivering outside, so on another occasion he packed off a roll of such stuffs to the Fathers of the Gesù that they might have them fashioned into garments for the slum-dwellers.[2] His few little valuables were nearly always in pawn. A poor man in sore need of ten or twelve crowns asked his help at the beginning of the month when his pockets were empty. Without hesitation he pulled off his Cardinal's ring and gave it to the suppliant with a note stating that it might be pawned in his own name for the man's benefit. Then, as soon as money came in, he sent privately to have it redeemed.[3] The pawnbrokers must have made a good penny out of that ring, for it was often in their hands.

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[1] Vignanesi's evidence, *Summarium*, n. 10, §§ 3–4; also n. 29, p. 117.

[2] Roman Process, 1622, pp. 153, 274; Bartoli, *Vita*, p. 355; *Summarium*, n. 29, p. 101.

[3] Roman Process, 1622, p. 152; Bartoli, *Vita*, p. 355.

On the morning when Bellarmine received his hat, Cardinal Aldobrandini made him a present of some silver candlesticks, a silver jug, and a silver inkstand and sand-box. The inkstand and sand-box on his desk gave the faithful Guidotti much worry, for they were too temptingly near his master's hand when a cry of distress which he could not otherwise meet reached him, and so the Maestro di Casa had constantly to be buying them back.[4] The silver candlesticks too, like those of Victor Hugo's Bishop, went off more than once under some shabby coat. An ‘Oltramontano’, who was probably an Englishman, accosted the Cardinal one day as he was getting out of his carriage. When he had told his story, Bellarmine sent for Guidotti and bade him give the man twenty-five scudi. ‘But your Lordship,’ answered the Maestro, ‘I haven't as much as twenty-five giulii.’[5] ‘Well then, give him our silver jug,’ said Bellarmine at once. Guidotti's face fell, but by some means or other he succeeded in raising the twenty-five scudi and saving the jug.[6]

It was very awkward being major-domo to such a master. Twice over, he had to repurchase the very mattress of the Cardinal's bed. A poor old Sienese woman who had been found sleeping on the floor of her attic, was the first to have it. She was very infirm, but the second beneficiary was a sturdy sort of beggar and Bellarmine feared that if Guidotti met him carrying away the mattress, there would be a row. Consequently, he arranged for a time when the Maestro was not about and cautioned his man to steal off with the prize as quickly and quietly as possible—'*andarsene di buon passo, e guardarsi dall' incappare nel Maestro di Casa.*'[1] He was thinking of his poor people day and night, and if his cook suggested any little delicacy for the table when he was ill or out of sorts, he used to say that it was a fine idea, but that he would enjoy the chicken much better if the extra price went for an alms and he was given mutton instead. Mutton then it would be, and some hungry waif would have a meal.[2]

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[1] *Summarium*, n. 14, p. 33.

[2] *L.c.*, n. 29, p. 102.

[3] Testimonio giurato per mano di Notaro del signor Cardinal Crescenzio, *l.c.*, n. 28, § 10.

[4] *L.c.*, n. 14, § 10. Guidotti himself is quoted.

[5] A giulio was about the tenth part of a scudo or crown.

[6] Roman Process, 1627, p. 276; quoted Process of 1828, p. 200.

Once, as he sat down to his modest dinner, he heard a great hubbub of angry voices in the hall. Asking what was wrong, he was told that a foreigner had demanded something to eat, and there being nothing to give him the fellow was carrying on as if he owned the place. Out went his Lordship to investigate. Having learned the man's story he turned to the flushed Guidotti and said: 'This gentleman has three good claims to carry on as if he owned the place, for he is poor, a stranger, and English.' Then he divided his dinner into two equal portions, as St. Martin divided his cloak, and the Inglese went off contentedly munching his half. Nor was that by any means the only occasion on which the Cardinal kept a fast to satisfy his beloved pensioners.[3] He was always stinting himself for them, and saving up every possible penny with miserly care. In September 1600, his brother Thomas, 'molto magnifico' as usual, proposed that they should erect between them a grandiose sepulchral monument on their parents' grave. Robert was quite in favour of the monument, but totally opposed to the grandeur. 'Let it be a simple memorial,' he wrote, 'for poor, live men have greater need of my money than dead men of rich tombs.'[4] More than once he sold the horses and carriages in his stables to relieve some pressing necessity.[5]

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[1] Roman Process, 1627, p. 116: 1828, p. 200. Evidence of John Pinaglia.

[2] *Summarium*, n. 14, p. 32; *Summ. additionale*, n. 14, p. 128.

[3] *Summarium*, n. 20, p. 102; Fuligatti, *Vita*, p. 196; Bartoli, *Vita*, p. 378. 'Egli ha ragione, disse il Cardinale, di comandar da padrone in casa mia, perche povero, e perche oltremontano, e perche Inglese.'

[4] Letter of 2 September 1600, quoted by Bartoli, *Vita*, p. 381.

[5] Roman Process, 1627, pp. 276, 371.

It was not merely what he gave, however, but his manner of giving that made him the idol of the unfortunate. He treated them as great gentlemen, always standing and removing his cap when they came in. No matter how late might be the hour or how weary and worn he might be, there was a welcoming smile for them, and a patient ear for the longest of stories. A beggar once blocked the stairs and refused at the bidding of one of the servants to make way for the Cardinal. The footman lost his temper and pushed the man so roughly that he fell. Bellarmine turned pale when he saw the incident. 'Sir,' he said to the servant, 'you have wounded me grievously. Do you not know that these are the very apple of my eye?'[1] Had any of us expostulated with him on his indiscriminate charity, saying, My Lord, you are pauperizing these people, depriving them of their self-respect, etc., etc., he would surely have laughed and said, *Amico mio*, go home and read your New Testament.

He had no use for the platitudes of officialdom. It was enough for him that a fellow-creature was cold or hungry or houseless. It was not his business to judge whether they were deserving, and his charity was of the authentic kind, that thinks no evil, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things. He had quite a good deal to endure for, of course, he was imposed upon and cheated again and again. Beggardom had its professionals and nowhere were they or are they more adept than in Italy. These fellows used to come a second or third time in disguise, with ever more heartrending stories. But he didn't mind. Charity is patient too, and he had a fixed principle that it was better to be deceived a hundred times than miss one genuine case. One cool applicant examined the substantial alms which he had been given with a critical eye, and said: 'My Lord, this is not enough. I want a good deal more to put me on my feet.' Now Bellarmine, as shall be seen later, had a naturally fierce temper, but instead of throwing the fellow into the street, he asked quietly, 'How much more, Sir?' and paid it as readily as if he were paying an honest tradesman's bill.[2] The following story in Guidotti's own words will show how much that harassed administrator had to endure:

> Whenever my Lord Cardinal went out for a walk or visit, he scattered alms right and left as usual. Every morning a perfect flood

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[1] Bartoli, *Vita*, p. 358.

[2] Bartoli, *l.c.*, p. 357.

of written petitions were passed on to me, each with a note in his Lordship's hand, saying 'Please give such and such a number of scudi to this person.' One fine day I got a note bidding me give thirty scudi to buy out of the army a soldier who had deserted from his regiment. I thought this was too good, and wrote back to say that I had no money in hand, that if his Lordship went on at this rate we should soon be bankrupt, and that the soldier could go back to his regiment or find work in some other place. If he were going to pay the fines of all such blackguards he would soon have his hands full. That was what I said, and I added other arguments too. His answer to me was that I ought not to be so terribly cautious and strict about the merits of a case, that if we gave freely and generously, God would see that we did not become bankrupts, and that if I had no money at the moment I could pawn something and get it that way. With regard to the matter of almsgiving, I could, if I thought well, write a whole book about my experiences of his Lordship's instructions and doings.[1]

His Lordship did not wait for misery to come and tell its tale. He sought it out. Whenever he went driving through the streets, his head footman carried a purse of money to be distributed to the casual hard-cases for whom his master was always on the watch. The trouble that appealed to his heart most of all, was the trouble of people, as we say, 'in reduced circumstances,' whom a worthy pride made reluctant to ask for help. Fynes Moryson while on his famous itinerary noticed that there were great numbers of these respectable poor people in Italy whose 'innate pride is such that they had rather starve for want than beg.'[2] The Cardinal employed secret agents to scent out such cases and then their names and needs were entered in his book, never to be forgotten. To a certain poor lady whose frock had seen better days, he sent one of his few fine robes that she might have it adapted for her use, telling her on the same occasion that she must provide herself in good time with all the winter wear she needed and send the bill to him.[3] Once he was informed that a girl of good family had died, rather from starvation than illness. Bursting into tears, he said, 'Why, why did nobody speak? If there was no money in the house, you had at least the candlesticks and the jug. Or could you not have pledged my ring or sold a horse or borrowed something in my name?' The thought of this dead girl haunted him and he showed as much remorse and grief as if he had been personally responsible for the tragedy.[1] We shall have occasion to deal further with this aspect of his charity in a later chapter and also to say something about his constant visits to the sick in the hospitals and their homes.

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[1] Roman Process, 1622, p. 162: 1627, p. 147; Bartoli, *Vita*, p. 376.

[2] *Itinerary*, first ed., 1617. Part III, p. 114.

[3] Bartoli, quoting an original letter dealing with this case. *Vita*, p. 380.

In his all-embracing kindness the good Cardinal did not forget that charity begins at home. Strict though he was about the morals of his household, he treated his men more as a father than as a master. Though his means were small, he tried always to pay their wages in advance and he was ever ready to help them with something beyond their wages when they had need of it. His own physician attended them in illness and he paid all the expenses incurred at such times. In a hundred little ways he proved that their health and happiness were to him as dear a concern as if they were all the sons of his own mother. Any present that might be sent for his table went straight to their hall, and any work of which he could relieve their shoulders was taken upon his own. His orders were all couched as though he were asking a favour —*Mi sarebbe caro*, *Se potete*, etc.,—and it made no difference whether he happened to be addressing a groom or a chaplain. The time of day, the weather, the health of the individual, were all carefully taken into account before he asked anybody to do him a service. These servants themselves testified that he never once suggested the slightest task after dark, or when wet, or at times of meals and siesta.[2] He hated the word servant, never used it himself, and protested when others did. 'Non sono miei servitori ma fratelli e compagni,' he said.[3]

After his elevation to the purple, the Pope had promptly made him a member of all the chief Roman congregations. As he was driving one day in company with some prelates to a meeting of the Holy Office, it began to rain with extraordinary violence. His first thought was for the footmen who were exposed to the downpour, so he bade his coachman halt and told his attendants to get out of the second carriage and squeeze themselves as well as they could into his own. Then, in spite of the strong protests of the head chaplain who reiterated that such a thing was 'simply not done'—*non era*

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[1] Roman Process, 1622, p. 113; Bartoli, *Vita*, p. 373.
[2] Finali's evidence, p. 93.
[3] *Summarium additionale*, n. 14, p. 128; Finali, p. 6.

conveniente ne solito,—the footmen were all installed in the empty vehicle. Bellarmine silenced the objector with a characteristic remark: 'They are our brothers in Christ,' he said, 'and no whit inferior to Cardinals in the only sense that matters.'[1] He was the most lenient and tolerant of masters to them all, never saying a word if they came late or inconvenienced him by going to sleep when on duty. At such times he would on no account permit the offender to be wakened but quietly did whatever had to be done himself.[2] If any of his suite came to his room to speak to him, he would not let them begin until they had taken a chair. When they had concluded their business, he would remove his cap and accompany them to the stairs with as much ceremony as if they were distinguished strangers.[3]

The spiritual welfare of his men was, of course, his deepest concern. He said Mass for them every day himself, and once each week, for years, personally instructed the under servants in their catechism. On the greater feasts, he preached to the whole household, and gave them special exhortations for four days previous to the general Communions which were fixed for the Annunciation, Easter, Pentecost, All Saints, Christmas, and Candlemas. Outside those times, he did not administer Holy Communion himself for fear that anyone might approach through the wrong motive of pleasing a master they loved rather than pleasing God. He did not meddle with the management of the house or pry into the secrets of life below stairs, but he was very strict about behaviour. A man might wear what he liked but he must not swear as he liked. He could whistle or sing to his heart's content and even break things with impunity, but if he was discovered gambling or indulging in scandalous or slanderous talk, he was shown no mercy. Bellarmine, however, was very rarely obliged to be stern, for his lackeys loved him too well to offend him, and behaved so well that to the eyes of Rome they seemed rather a religious community than a prince's suite.[4]

Vignanesi tells the following little story of his master's tolerant kindliness:

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[1] Evidence of Mgr. Louis della Valle. Bartoli, *Vita*, p. 253.

[2] Marcello Cervini, *Imago*, pp. 54, 73: 'Nec raro accidit ut in suos administros a Cubiculo dormientes offendens, excitare minime fuit passus; vel ex se confecerit, vel distulerit quod esset imperandum.'

[3] Finali's evidence, p. 10; Process of 1828, p. 353.

[4] Bartoli, *Vita*, pp. 248–252.

> After Pontifical Vespers on the eve of Saints Peter and Paul in the year 1600, the Cardinals in their state robes escorted the Pope to his apartments. Cardinal Bellarmine alone was left behind, and this was because his valet had fallen asleep and neglected to bring the Cappa Magna which must be worn on such occasions. The Cardinal waited a quarter of an hour, and during the whole of that time showed not the least sign of impatience nor uttered a single word of annoyance. Once, only, he turned to me and said, 'What has become of the Cappa?' Then he went on talking quietly to those around him as if there was nothing the matter. I straightway dismissed that valet, but the good Cardinal took pity on him, and after allowing two days to pass as an example to the others and to protect my authority, he received the offender back again into his service.[1]

Like a true disciple of St. Francis, Blessed Robert had sympathy and compassion not only for men but for all living things. Marcello Cervini, who spent years in his service, recorded that it always made him very angry and sad to see a poor beast ill-used, and that he sometimes preferred to stay at home rather than deprive his horses of their rest and refreshment.[2]

5. We have now seen a little of the Cardinal's dealings with God and his fellow-men. To complete the picture, we may add a few paragraphs about the last of the great trinity of relationships into which he, like all the children of Adam, was born. To others he was all generosity: to himself the harshest and meanest of taskmasters. The witnesses speak again and again about his *temperantia incredibilis*. With age creeping upon him, with bad health, with endless work of the most arduous kind, he yet fasted rigorously three times a week all the year round.[3] Throughout Lent and Advent, he tasted no food until towards sunset.[4] When friends expostulated with him on the point, he used to say smiling:

> I do it to save my soul, for Christ Our Lord warns us that unless our justice abounds more than that of the Scribes and Pharisees we shall not enter the Kingdom of Heaven, and we know, out of

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[1] *Summarium*, n. 17, p. 40.

[2] 'Ex hac incensa caritate in proximos, compassio etiam quaedam redundabat in bruta animantia, ceterasque creaturas Dei, quas maxime defatigari et exerceri crudeliter, tolerabat molestissime; et aliquando se continuit domi, ne equos a quiete et refrigerio revocaret.' *Imago*, pp. 73–74.

[3] *Summarium*, n. 18, pp. 42–43; Cepari in Roman Process, 1622, p. 96; Fuligatti, *Vita*, p. 148.

[4] *Summarium*, n. 29, p. 104; Process of 1828, p. 259.

their own mouths, that the Pharisees fasted twice in the week. Therefore it is quite clear we must fast at least three times, if our justice is to abound more than theirs.[1]

At the best of times his table was not very inviting, for he loved to dine on the garlic and chicory which were the usual fare of the poor. He would never permit more than a shilling or so to be spent on his dinner, and anything in the way of delicacies was entirely taboo. Twice only in the week did he take meat and then it was usually that intolerable veal which is one of the plagues of Italy. He never seemed to care what he ate. The cook's best efforts were wasted on him, for if any dish out of the ordinary was sent in, he failed to notice it. Give him a single egg for his dinner and he was quite content. A Neapolitan gentleman named Marchesis testified feelingly: 'I know that he ate next to nothing at meal-times, and I know it from my own sad experience. He often used to ask me to dine with him, and I as often used to refuse, telling him frankly that the few times I had accepted I had been nearly starved to death.'[2] He loved best the mortifications and sufferings that came straight from God, cold and heat, the ache of rheumatism, headaches, and the other natural shocks which need so little wooing to be won.

Not until the very end of his life, and then only at the Jesuit General's urgent entreaty would he permit a small fire—*un poco di fuoco*—to be lighted in his room. 'During the whole of winter,' writes his chamberlain Mongardi, 'he saw to it that there were big fires burning in the hall, the waiting-room, and the kitchen so that the rest of us might not be cold. But he would have none for himself.'[3] If he expected a guest, he had a match put to the logs in his grate, but as soon as ever the guest went out the fire did too, for he used to dismantle it with his own hands.[4] And yet he was most acutely sensitive to the cold. His hands became so frost-bitten and covered with chilblain wounds that towards the end of his life he was obliged to wear gloves nearly always, though until the damage was done nothing would persuade him to use them.[5] His good Maestro di Camera, Vignanesi, saw him one day shivering over his books and forced a muff on him so pleadingly that the Cardinal could not refuse. In five minutes, however, the muff was back with its owner accompanied by a little joking note in denunciation of such manacles.[1] When Cardinal Crescenzio ventured to protest against the absence of a fire in mid-winter, he said with a shaky smile, 'Dear friend, do leave me some little chance to practise patience.'[2] And thus it was with all the hard ways which he chose to go. He was forever trying to conceal their stones and thorns from any eyes but God's under merry pretences of every description. They were good for his health, or they helped his work, or he just didn't like their opposites. He would not have a fire, he said, because he could not be bothered looking after it.[3] In the summer months the flies provided him with excellent opportunities for penance.

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[1] Fuligatti, *Vita*, p. 148.

[2] 'Che me levava morto di fame della sua tavola tanto era parchissimo nel mangiare.' *Summarium additionale*, n. 10, p. 96.

[3] Roman Process, 1622, pp. 41, 57.

[4] Matteo Torti's evidence, Roman Process, 1622, p. 128. Torti was one of his chaplains.

[5] *Id. Ibid.*

> He would not brush them from his face, though as everybody knows they are a great torment [says Cardinal Crescenzio], and when others wondered at this, he used to answer very sweetly that it was not fair to trouble the little things, since they had no other Paradise than this liberty of flying about and alighting whereever it pleased them.[4]

To the end of his life, he kept up with unfailing regularity the various practices of mortification which are customary in the Society of Jesus, and he was so faithful to all his former rules that his friend Fuligatti says he went by the title, 'Il Gesuita vestito di rosso'—the Jesuit robed in red. One curious and out of the way reference to his sanctity and asceticism is interesting enough to be given a few lines in the present section. It occurs in a rare little book entitled, *A New Description of Ireland wherein is described the dispositions of the Irish whereunto they are inclined.* Ireland made good copy in those gallant times. It was the reputed haunt of fearsome savages, and just as we delight now to read about the head-hunters of Borneo, so did the Elizabethan ladies like to have their flesh made to creep by tales of the wild

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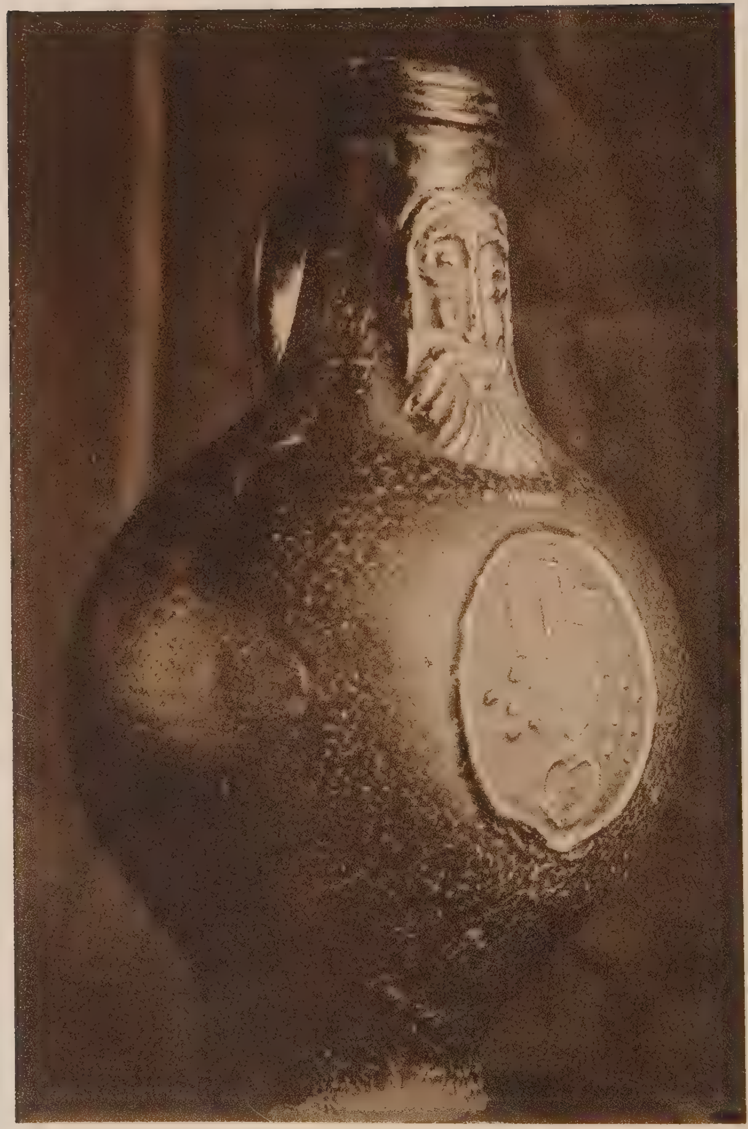
[1] Bartoli, *Vita*, p. 403.

[2] Testimonio giurato, *Summarium*, n. 28, p. 85.

[3] 'Dicendo di non aver tempo da perdere attorno alli stizzi.' Roman Process, 1622, p. 41.

[4] 'Diceva con una dolcezza grande, che non era dovere dar noia a quell' animaletti, li quali non hanno altro paradiso, che questa libertà di volare e stare dove piu loro fosse piaciuto.' Testimonio giurato, *Summarium*, n. 28, p. 85; cf. J. Lorini's *Commentarii in Deuteronomium*, Lyons, 1625, cap. v, ver. 14.



A UNIQUE BELLARMINE.

This jug, which is now in the London Museum, may have been used originally in the sacristy of some Catholic church. No similar specimen has yet been found.

Irishry. A Dublin gentleman of Oxford education named Richard Stanihurst wrote a ' Description of Ireland ' with the assistance of his tutor Edmund Campion, which was published in *The Chronicles* of Holinshed, in 1577. Thirty years later, Barnaby Rich, Gent., late of her Majesty's Irish garrison militia, thought he could improve on Stanihurst, and produced the ' New Description ' referred to above, (London 1610). Barnaby was a typical swash-buckler of the Elizabethan kind, but he grew tired of slaughtering the Irish and took to literature, incidentally providing Shakespeare with the plot of *Twelfth Night*. He had been brought up, he tells us, ' in the fields among unlettered soldiers,' and he was wholly self-educated. His book is almost entirely a criticism of Stanihurst who, in his opinion, had not blackened the Irish savages sufficiently. In one place Stanihurst says : ' As for Abstinence and Fasting, it is to them (the Irish) a familiar kind of chastisement.' Says Rich in his contorted English :

> I think this abstinence and fasting is the holinesse which Maister Stanihurst hath formerly spoken of, for this is a visible holinesse, indeede, which every man may see and wonder at ; for let me speak of the most abject Creatures that I think Ireland or the world affoordeth, and those are the *Kearne* [1] of Ireland amongst whom there is not so notable a wretch to bee found that will not observe the fasting daies, three daies in a weeke at the least, and those are Wednesdaies, Fridaies and Saturdaies : then they have other Vigiles and such Saints Eeves as I have never heard of but in Ireland nor I think be knowne in any other place, which they observe and keepe with such religious zeal and devotion, *that I am sure Cardinall Bellarmine himselfe cannot be more ceremonious then these bee, nor show himselfe to be more holy nor more honest* ; yet that very day, that for conscience sake they will abstaine from eating of Flesh, Butter, Cheese, Milk, Egges, and such like, that very houre, they will not forbeare to spoile, to robbe, to ravish, to murther nor to commit any other villainy, what or howsoever.[2]

6. After becoming a prince, the new Cardinal began a large correspondence with his dear friend John Baptist Carminata, who held, in those days, the post of Jesuit Provincial in Sicily. John Baptist was a man of God after Bellarmine's heart, affectionate, simple, and utterly unworldly. When his friend was raised to the purple he was the very first to send congratulations, but this forwardness began to trouble his

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[1] Kern = the light-armed foot-soldiers of the ancient Irish clan system.

[2] *A New Description*, pp. 10–11. Italics inserted.

humble soul when the letter had gone. Who was he to offer his paltry respects, in advance of the great ones of the world ? On 11 June 1599 Bellarmine answered :

> Dearest Father. . . . Since I entered this new Order, hundreds of letters have reached me, but none so sweet and welcome as yours. Let me tell you, were there a year's novitiate before entering it, you would never have seen me professed. However, vows have to be taken on the very first day. Like yourself, I too have a great desire to see our holy Father Ignatius canonized, but during the present Pope's time, I see no chance of it at all. It would be easier to get Father Francis Xavier through, but I think the Society does not want him to be canonized before our Father Ignatius. As to Monsignor the Archbishop of Monreale, you have told me nothing I did not know before, as I had already heard much of his zeal and liberality to the poor, and of his other good qualities. To put the finishing touch to his generosity he only needs to give me a serviceable mule as an alms, for I still live on the purses of kind people and am at present enjoying the mule of Monsignor Tarugi, whom the Archbishop knows well. I take this opportunity to tell you that when I consider the many distractions and much worldly pomp of my present position, I envy bishops, because I think their state is safer and more like that of religious, and I find, too, the Calendar full of sainted bishops but can discover only one cardinal, St. Bonaventure, and he lived as a cardinal only a few days. *Miseremini mei saltem vos amici mei.* Indeed, I put my trust in nothing so much as in the prayers of my many dear friends, some living and some dead. Ora pro me, Pater amantissime ! [1]

Five days after the dispatch of this letter, the Cardinal wrote again at great length :

> DEAREST FATHER IN CHRIST,—
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> It is very strange that you have received none of the five letters which I wrote to you with my own hand. I will try to make up for their loss by the length of this one. As for myself, I am doing my best to bear the burden of the purple which has been imposed on me with as little detriment to the welfare of my soul as possible. But I must own to you that I am very frightened and in much danger, for I now possess a rather grand and pros-

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[1] This letter is one of forty-nine from Bellarmine to Carminata which still lie unedited in Roman archives. Though he could find only one cardinal in the list of Saints, Blessed Robert discovered several who had been beatified and wrote out a catalogue of them in his own hand, that he might pray to them daily. *Summarium additionale*, n. 7, p. 63. Of the fourteen Jesuits who are canonized saints and the hundred who have been beatified, Bellarmine himself is the only one who wore a mitre or a cardinal's hat.

perous-looking suite, men who are at my beck and call to do my least bidding with alacrity and care. Besides this, my position brings with it not a few creature comforts, and though I try not to give my heart to them, still, there they are. I am afraid, then, lest it be deservedly said to me, *Recepisti mercedem tuam.* So having no counsellor and not knowing what to do, I commend myself entirely to God's intimate friends that they may take me with them, who am unworthy of their company, to the ' everlasting dwelling-places ' which by my own efforts I could never reach. I have, indeed, a good will and firm purpose not to offend God, not to enrich nor aggrandize my relatives, not to aim at higher dignities but rather to fly from their approach with all my power, not to give scandal in anything, and to say Mass every day as I have always done. But I know well that this is not enough.

The thought of renouncing the purple is constantly in my mind, but how I am to do it I cannot see. I feel that my efforts would be unavailing and that men would say it was only another of my poses. Nor am I sure that the renunciation would be pleasing to God, seeing that it was by His will that I was forced to accept the dignity. To introduce novelties into my way of living by reducing the number of my suite or adopting a simple style in dress, would give the impression that I was ambitious to initiate reforms which the most austere and upright cardinals have neither counselled nor adopted. St. Antoninus, for instance, teaches in his treatise *De Statu Cardinalium* that a certain degree of splendour is necessary, if the dignity of this sacred Order is to receive its due meed of respect from the world at large. I am trying as hard as ever I can to keep *my* splendour and dignity as modest as may be. Among those of my colleagues who are neither extravagant nor showy but follow a middle course that has, however, its own elegance and distinction, I hold the least elegant and distinguished place. Indeed within the limits of decorum and decency, I am just not shabby.

My reason for putting these matters before you, dear Father, is that you, as the guide and master of my soul, may admonish me if in anything I should do wrong, and that thus, by your means, I may be converted to wiser counsels. I will now give you some exact details. There are ten gentlemen in my suite, to perform various higher duties. Most of the ten have two servants each, but some have only one. Besides these, I have fourteen servants for ordinary house and stable work, so the sum total of the domestics does not exceed thirty. I told each of them privately when I engaged them that, according to the law of my house, swearing, impurity, or any other serious sin entailed instant dismissal. Each week I call them together and exhort them as earnestly as I can to lead good lives and to perform their religious duties. I continue to say Office at the canonical times as of old, and have not given up the practice of fasting on Wednesdays and Fridays which I adopted in the past.[1]

I try never to send away a poor man disconsolate or empty-handed, but, as I am poor myself, I can only give little sums at a time. If ever I become rich, then I shall be lavish with my alms, according to the counsel of Tobias. Goodness knows, it is not the desire to hoard which prevents me from giving much to each petitioner, for I never had the slightest love for money or property. As for austerities, I am afraid I am not given to hair-shirts, sleeping on the ground, a bread and water diet, etc., for as I am now hastening toward my sixtieth year and my health is all but broken, I doubt whether I could support such hardships for long. Still, if ever a spiritual and prudent man should recommend them, I think, unless my self-love is playing me a trick, I would be quite ready to take them up.[2] At first I decided to have only one carriage, but I soon discovered that a second was necessary for the convenience of my suite, without whom it is not permitted to attend the Papal services and consistories. I could, of course, get a lift from my friends on the way to these functions, but the return journey was the trouble. My friends' coaches were not available then, so if I had not a second carriage of my own the gentlemen-in-waiting would have been obliged to go home on foot, and that would not have been correct. The furniture of my house is as simple and plain as possible, and I did not allow my arms to be embroidered on the tapestries or couches in the vestibule, though it is the usual custom to have them put on. All the chairs except four are plain leather-covered ones. The four are in velvet, but are only produced when we have visits from cardinals, royal ambassadors, and other great people. The rest of the furniture is very ordinary stuff indeed, which nobody could call valuable. I wear no silk at all, and have nothing grander than plain, cheap wool in my wardrobe.

I am writing thus to you that you may relieve my doubts with your wise counsel, and tell me plainly what I ought to do. You are my intimate friend and that is why I open my heart to you, but I would not like others to be told what I have said. The Pope wanted me to accept the bishopric of my native place, Montepulciano, but only on condition that I should not leave Rome. I did not accept his terms as I know how dangerous it is to be an absentee bishop. If, however, he would permit me to reside in the diocese I would not be so reluctant, because it seems to me that the episcopal office is more spiritual, more religious, more fruitful of good, and more secure, than that of the cardinalate alone, which though sacred has still much that is secular about it. I am not forgetting the difficulties and dangers involved in the care of souls, but when God calls, it is not for us to cry safety first. Obedience is, without doubt, the safest state, for, as St. Francis says, in obedience there is profit and in prelacy peril. But our choice should fall rather on that way of life which is most pleasing to God and at the same time least dangerous for our souls. Forgive the length of my letter and pray for me, Father. I shall be anxiously awaiting your good advice, and I beg you with all my heart to pull me with you to Heaven, somehow, even though I be reluctant. Good-bye.[1]

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[1] He also fasted on Saturdays. Cf. *supra*, p. 418.

[2] The previous chapter has given us some information which Blessed Robert did not think fit to communicate to Carminata. He did not live on bread and water, but his usual fare was not much better, and though he left out hair-shirts, the flies of Rome provided him with a good substitute. Moreover it is known that he scourged his poor body three times a week. —Process of 1828, pp. 276, 277.

Among Blessed Robert's papers his confessor Rocca discovered the following series of questions and answers which show that he was not at all easy in his mind about the dignity that had been thrust upon him :

First : How was entrance gained ? Was it by the right door.
Answer : By the right door.
Second : Is it possible to live in this state without offending God ?
Answer : It is possible.
Third : Could God be served better by returning to the former state ?
Answer : It is doubtful.
Fourth : Would such a return be a better example ?
Answer : It is doubtful.
Fifth : Is such a return possible ?
Answer : Hardly.
Sixth : Is it safer to take with simplicity of heart the will of God who has called me to the state by the voice of His Vicar on earth ; and may I put away all anxiety about the change and try to perfect myself in the position which obedience has assigned me ?
Answer : ——[2]

The next letter to Carminata is dated August 6th. That good man seems to have criticized his friend's unfavourable comparison of cardinals with bishops. Bellarmine answered that he had given his preference to the episcopal state because it seemed to him safer than the other, but no doubt he was mistaken and Father John Baptist would excuse him. He knew the perils of the cardinalate well, but had not weighed so closely the dangers of a bishop's life. Then he continues :

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[1] This very instructive letter is published in Aguilera's *Provinciae Siculae Soc. Jesu ortus et res gestae*. Panormi, 1740, pars 2a, pp. 105–108. In this same good history there is an excellent account of Carminata's life and labours (pp. 83 sqq.) which shows clearly that he was one of the greatest of the early Jesuits.

[2] Fuligatti, *Vita*, pp. 135–136. Fuligatti received a copy of the document from Rocca. There is no answer to the sixth question.

> The mule in my last letter was by no means a mere joke. I was begging for one quite seriously. Formerly I used to have poverty *in voto* but now I have it *in re*, and St. Paul says, *vestra abundantia horum inopiam suppleat*. However, it does not matter much, because Mgr. Tarugi lends me his mule whenever I need it, and so I am in possession of the beast without any expense at all. . . . I shall make a point of getting the names of those who die in the Society and I shall say the Masses for them, as I do the usual weekly and monthly Masses. I did not take the Saint for the month because I practise this devotion at home, giving a patron to each of my household. Still I shall be very glad to have one brought to me from our House. The messenger who comes each month could bring it. I give him six or seven shillings every time he comes as a little pledge of what I would like to do, if only I had the means. . . .

In September Blessed Robert wrote again. The thirty to thirty-five retainers seem to have shocked Carminata somewhat, for being a simple, unworldly soul, he failed to see that cardinals in those days were princes in the fullest sense of the word, and whether they liked it or not had to maintain the outward dignity of their state :

> My Very Reverend Dear Father,—
>
> I have had two letters in which you have done me the favour of pointing out a couple of things for my benefit. The first is perfectly true, namely that I am cold by nature, especially when anybody opposes me. Some call my coldness modesty, but its real names are good-for-nothingness and cowardice. I might be forgiven the cowardice had I more charity, for perfect love casts out fear. Pray God to light up its holy fires in my heart. The justice of the second criticism you make is not so certain, namely that I should not keep thirty servants. Experience proves that it is impossible to do with less. Cardinal Borromeo, a great despiser of worldly pomp, has forty-five of them or fifteen more than myself, and other Cardinals who are accounted very modest in their establishments, have more than sixty or seventy. The great ones keep over a hundred. Every day I am obliged to attend various congregations as well as Papal services and functions, and to all these I have to go in my robes and with a suite. It is not always possible to collect friends to accompany one, so

the only course is to keep eight or ten gentlemen for the purpose. Besides thirty persons are barely sufficient to cope with all the housework and incessant ceremonial at home, as the rest discover to their cost when any one of them falls ill. Would to God I could live quietly with but a single companion. I hope soon to see you again and then your Reverence can give me all the advice I need and desire. Help me meantime with your prayers.[1]

A year later, October 1600, Carminata had finished his term of office. It was intended that he should then devote himself entirely to mission work but he had fallen ill, and the thought of his sixty-four years made him very depressed.

My very dear Father [wrote Bellarmine], I believe your month's illness was a little bit of Purgatory for the faults you committed while you were Provincial, so that having finished your term of office and paid off all your debts, you might with lighter heart and better prospects give yourself up to the work of preaching. According to my calculations, your Reverence is not more than sixty-four and that number of years does not make you too old for the pulpit. St. Augustine preached up to the age of seventy-six, and here in Rome you will find men over seventy who have accepted bishoprics, a dignity which includes, *de jure*, the obligation of preaching. Others who have turned the Biblical three score and ten would not be afraid of accepting the Papacy. I very much envy you the post you will hold two months hence, because you will be able to put aside every other care, *et instare verbo Dei et orationi*. Every day I see more and more the good I have lost without hope of recovery. Would, at least, that I could assure myself that all this is by the call and not merely by the permission of God. It seems, on the one hand, to have been the call of God, for I entered upon it solely out of obedience and under pain of mortal sin in case I refused. But on the other hand, I fear lest it be a mere permission of God, because I do not see how I can render any very signal service to the Church in this state. I am convinced, for example, that in many matters we ought to go to the very roots to reform abuses, but my views meet with no sympathy. Pray commend me to God that He may cause me to do His holy will, or call me quickly to Himself.

Another of Blessed Robert's correspondents was the Bishop of Verdun, Prince Eric of Lorraine, a very pleasant figure to meet among the rather pompous dignitaries of that epoch. He was young, noble, and wealthy, but his one desire was to renounce his mitre and become a monk. The Roman authorities, however, hardened their hearts against all his entreaties to be set free, and Eric in his sorrow turned to Bellarmine for consolation. The answer he received was as follows :

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[1] Fuligatti quotes the latter part of this letter, *Vita*, p. 153; Aguilera gives the opening paragraphs, *Provinciae Siculae Soc. Jesu ortus et res gestae*, p. 108.

Most Illustrious and Right Reverend Lord,—

I was brought by one post two of your letters entrusting me with two affairs and telling me at the same time of the wish of your holy soul to come to Rome, to lay aside your pastoral charge, and to put your salvation in security. As to the business matters I will do all in my power, but that, I fear, is not much, because many other people who will not easily waive their rights will have something to say. It is wonderful the number of difficulties that arise when there is question of money. But as to your holy desire of taking wings like a dove and flying to a place of sweet tranquillity, I will tell your Lordship what occurs to my mind. I consider that no more lasting peace nor truer security of salvation can be found, than in fulfilling with entire devotion of heart the holy will of God. I have always loved particularly those words of Our Lord : 'Father, let this chalice pass from Me ; nevertheless, not My will but Thine be done.' We have been bought at a great price, so, like purchased slaves, we owe Our Lord simple, unquestioning obedience. As long as our consciences assure us that we have not sought, nor desired, nor chosen a higher place, that at the present moment we have no liking for the world's honours and would willingly lay them aside if we could, as long as conscience tells us this, I do not see why we ought not to acquiesce in God's will which has been made known to us clearly by the command of His Vicar. A bishop's burden is a heavy one and full of cares and danger, nor perhaps is the dignity of a cardinal less burdensome and dangerous. If it has pleased Him who made us and redeemed us to call us into these straits and perils, who are we to question His wisdom ? He who loved us and laid down His life for us deigned to say to Peter, and through him to every pastor, 'If you love Me, feed My sheep.' Who then, except one who loved not God but himself, would dare to answer Our Lord, 'I will not feed Thy sheep lest I lose my soul.' The true lover of God would say with the Apostle, *Malo anathema esse a Christo pro fratribus meis*, rather than not bear the burden which the love of God has laid on him. But there can be no danger to salvation where charity reigns, for though we fail in many things through ignorance or human frailty, yet charity covers a multitude of sins.

My dearest Lord, if there were any hope that with God's good pleasure and the blessing of His Vicar you could come to the quiet of religious life and I could return to it, we should undoubtedly do so with the heartiest will in the world. But there is not the faintest hope, and that is why I have written what I have written.

I wanted to tell you whose holy soul I see to be tortured by the weight of your charge, what I am always telling myself.

If business should bring you to Rome, it would be a great treat not only for myself but for Cardinal Baronius and many others as well. However, if we cannot have the pleasure of your company, I know that we shall not lack the solace and help of your prayers.[1]

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[1] Rome, 6 November 1601. Fuligatti, *Epistolae familiares*, xv, pp. 38–41.

CHAPTER XVIII

ONE THING AND ANOTHER

1. On 1 August 1599, Father Alphonsus Agazzari, Vice-Rector of the Jesuit Professed House in Rome, sent the following letter to his friend Father James Dominico, Secretary of the Society of Jesus. It is very long but also very interesting :

> Last Thursday (July 29), I went to pay Cardinal Bellarmine a visit, and invited him, coolly enough, to give an exhortation in our church here, behind closed doors, on July 31,[1] instead of the one which I myself was due to address to the community. He showed himself most willing to oblige, and added that as the exhortation was to be delivered between 17 and 18 o'clock he would also join us at dinner. Perhaps, too, he would take Cardinal Baronius with him, he said, as they would be together on the Saturday morning at the Congregation of the Index. We agreed that it was to be entirely a little family celebration, and that there was to be nothing out of the ordinary in the way of devotions. But he insisted on my taking six crowns to buy something extra for the community's dinner. I told him that three crowns would be quite sufficient to buy a few melons and other such delicacies, but he made me take the whole six, and so I was able to provide, in addition to the ordinary fare, a hors d'œuvre of melon and fresh egg and, at the end, a pastry made with pears and butter. Everybody in the house had some of these good things, both Cardinals and Jesuits.
>
> Well, on Friday evening, at about 22 o'clock, Cardinal Bellarmine sent me word by his Maestro di Camera that he had thought better of the matter, and now considered that it would be indelicate if he were himself to invite Cardinal Baronius, because it might look as if he were inviting him to his exhortation. So if I wanted Baronius to be present I must invite him myself. As I could not go out just then, I at once sent Father Gabriel Biscioli with a companion to St. Peter's, who was to offer to the Cardinal in my name the following formal invitation : Cardinal Bellarmine wishes to make us an exhortation to-morrow in memory of our Father Ignatius, and knowing that your Lordship will be with him at the Congrega-

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[1] The anniversary of the death of St. Ignatius.

tion of the Index, we invite you to give us the pleasure of your company along with Cardinal Bellarmine. He accepted with alacrity, and so on the Saturday morning before 14 o'clock the two of them appeared at the front door.

I was about to take them upstairs when Cardinal Baronius said that he would like to go to the church to spend a little while in prayer. No carpets had been laid down, no prie-dieu made ready, because we did not think that they would want to go into the church at once. After genuflecting to the Blessed Sacrament, Baronius went straight to the tomb of our Blessed Father, followed by Bellarmine. Having reached it they both knelt down and remained a considerable time in prayer. Before rising, Baronius prostrated himself and kissed the flooring over the grave. Then they both went back to the house. Now there were many people in the church, both men and women, who witnessed what had taken place, and these immediately proceeded to imitate the Cardinals. Some foreign visitors strewed flowers over the tomb. I took the two men upstairs, Baronius to the big drawing-room and Bellarmine to the room next this. There they removed their rochets and rested a little, and then, when they had washed and dried their hands, we went into the refectory for dinner. The Cardinals sat one at each end of the table and were served by some of the Fathers. At the finish, I invited in Father Provincial, Father Rector, and four others whose conversation I thought our guests would appreciate, namely Fathers Alagona, Vasquez, Clavius, and Viglialpando.

To the exhortation there came our students from the Roman College, the novices, and some others, who taken together with the community numbered, I think, more than three hundred. When it was time, I went upstairs to fetch the Cardinals. As we were leaving the room Baronius raised his eyes to the picture of our Father Ignatius and paused to praise it, saying that it would look very well above his tomb. He gave many examples to prove that placing it there would not be improper, and turning to me said: Father Vice-Rector, it would give me great pleasure if you would have a fine gilded frame made for this picture at my expense, and then put it in the church over the tomb of Father Ignatius. But mind, I am to do the paying. At this point Cardinal Bellarmine broke in saying that it was his business to have this done, and that he would pay. No, answered Baronius, I want to pay. Arguing thus we passed into the church, and the exhortation began. It lasted a good hour and was most beautiful, to the point, and pronounced with great fervour. Everyone was delighted and comforted by it, and it was all in praise of our Father Ignatius. Perhaps I will be able to send you a written copy of it later, as the Cardinal has promised me one. He told me that he had written it the previous night, remaining up two hours to do so, but as you will see for yourself it looks as if it had been meditated and laboured over for a very long time. Since, then, it was composed almost without preparation, we can easily believe that its thoughts were suggested by the Cardinal's great devotion to Father Ignatius.

After the exhortation there were some prayers, and then the Cardinals went again to the tomb and knelt down, Baronius once more prostrating to kiss the floor. When he had risen he said that he wondered very much to find the tomb so bare and so destitute of all holy ornament. He was told that in the past various ex-votos had been offered for favours obtained through the intercession of Father Ignatius, but that our Father General would never permit them to be hung up at the tomb. The Cardinal then asked me where these articles were kept, and I answered that some of them were in the Chapel of the Saints under the high altar. He bade me have them brought out at once and he even set off himself to the Chapel to fetch them. Holding them in his hands, he said, 'I want to place them above the tomb myself, and you can tell Father General that it was I who did it. I am sure he will not mind.' Then he ordered a ladder to be brought in that he might hang the ex-votos on the wall, and so it was done. Afterwards he said he thought it would be very fitting if a picture of Father Ignatius was placed here and ordered the one in the hall to be brought down, as he was determined not to go until he had put it in position with his own hands. The frame could be made for it later on, he said.

Well, the picture was brought and as the ladder he had first used was too short he sent for a longer one. It surprised and delighted all our Fathers and Brothers, in equal measure, to see this good old man mount the steps in full pontificals, carrying to the top the picture of Father Ignatius. And though I tried as much as I possibly could to prevent him, fearing that he would fall or do himself some injury, yet impelled by his devotion he insisted on going up and placing the picture on the cornice of the tomb with his own hands. When he had hung it, he turned round to ask us who were holding the ladder below, whether it was straight and in the middle. I think I said to him, as he came down, that I doubted whether Father General would be pleased with what had taken place. Tell Father General, he answered again, that I did it with my own hands and also that I shall let the Pope know what I have done here to-day. More prayers followed, during which the Cardinal raised his eyes to Heaven with a great sigh of devotion. Then, after bending to kiss the tomb once more, he turned to the Fathers and Brothers who were standing near with their birettas in their hands, and said to them: 'Next year I want to be reminded a good week beforehand and I shall place a carpet here at the tomb. I desire to have a solemn and public feast celebrated with the doors open. . . .' When they had changed and come into the visitors' room again, Cardinal Baronius wished many of the Fathers to sit down with them, and asked Father Vasquez to give a detailed account of the miracle that had been wrought on him.[1] Cardinal Bellarmine said that the cure was quite natural and not miraculous at all, but when Baronius had heard the story he affirmed again and again that it was a manifest miracle. . . .

Rumours of the exhortation spread immediately, and when the church doors were opened many people came in. The pupils in our schools heard of the happenings, so when lectures and lessons were over they rushed through the streets in a great hurry shouting, 'To the Gesù, to the Gesù!' and came straight to the tomb to pray and kiss the stones. To-day at dawn, the Duchess of Sessa sent three silver candlesticks as tall as a man, and without saying a word to the sacristans or anybody else had them placed at the tomb of Father Ignatius with three huge candles alight in them. The sacristans came at once to tell me, but neither I nor any of the Fathers considered it proper to resist the wishes of such a personage. So they are burning still, and all day to-day people have been streaming in to visit that holy body.[2]

2. Thus began, through the instrumentality of Bellarmine and his great friend Baronius, the popular veneration of the Founder of the Jesuits which led in due course to his canonization. A little incident happened just before the exhortation which, if not a device of Heaven, was certainly curiously like one. The General who was then at Frascati wrote to the Vice-Rector warning him not to permit any external devotions to Ignatius on July 31. But the muleteer who brought the letter forgot to deliver it in Rome, and that was why Bellarmine received his invitation.[3]

The Cardinal took for his text the well-known response from the Office of confessors who were not bishops, *Amavit eum Dominus et ornavit eum, stolam gloriae induit eum, et ad portas Paradisi coronavit eum*, and began as follows:

It is with great joy, my dear Fathers and Brothers, that I come to speak to you about the glories and virtues of our Blessed Father

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[1] Father Michael Vasquez suffered from the stone and affirmed that he had been suddenly and completely relieved on the application of a relic of Ignatius.

[2] *Monumenta Historica S.J.* Monumenta Ignatiana, Series Quarta, Madrid, 1918, t. II, pp. 452–458. There is a good deal more of this letter. Part of it is also given in a Latin translation (the original is Italian) in the *Acta Sanctorum*, Julii, t. VII, pp. 615–617. Döllinger, in his edition of Bellarmine's *Autobiography*, insinuates that the Jesuits and particularly Bellarmine himself *forced* the cultus of their Founder on the world! *Die Selbstbiographie*, pp. 323 sqq.

[3] Orlandinus, *Historia S.J.*, pars I, lib. XVI, n. 136.

Ignatius, on this day when we commemorate his happy departure from this vale of tears to his home of eternal joy in Heaven. I have a twofold aim in view, to show a little gratitude to my Father and yours for all he has done for me, and to kindle in your hearts, by passing his virtues in review, a holy desire of imitating them and of following closely in his footsteps. And I am anxious, too, that you by your prayers and he by his intercession in Heaven, would obtain for me from God the grace to conquer and rise above the dangers and difficulties with which the state of the cardinalate abounds.

After spending some time on the words *Amavit eum Dominus*, the speaker passed to the next word, *ornavit* :

It would be too big an enterprise and one quite beyond my capacity, to try and capture in a little circle of words all the virtues with which God endowed our Blessed Father. Indeed, the very attempt would be an injustice to him, so I shall speak only of those virtues which Our Lord declared necessary in the founders of religious orders. *Quis putas est fidelis servus et prudens quem constituit dominus super familiam suam* ? Fidelity in the will and prudence in the intellect, these are the light of the world and the salt of the earth, and any one who examines the actions of our Blessed Father with a little care, will easily see how they glorified and made sweet his relations with God. Fidelity to God consists in giving Him all that we possess without reserve, knowing that it is from Him we hold everything. And that is what Ignatius did. He did not think it sufficient to deprive himself of his very clothes at Manresa and, heroically renouncing all that the world esteems, to follow in nakedness his naked Lord. When he realized that his soul, his reason, his intelligence, were also God's gifts to him, and that they could, if enriched with learning and fortified by prayer, be employed for God's glory and the service of his neighbour, he straightway put himself to school, in spite of his age, to learn the first rudiments of letters. Like a very faithful servant, he would not let the talents his Master had given him rust in idleness.

Then he goes to Paris to study philosophy and theology. Nothing dismays his valiant heart, neither poverty so extreme that he had to beg daily for a crust of bread, nor the tempests of persecution that were raised against him. He had his great ambition of love to support him that one day he would be strong enough to turn the current of men's thoughts and actions into such channels as the glory of God and the good of their souls required. And that was his aim throughout the rest of his life. He put his labours, his mind, his strength, so entirely at God's disposal that he was never known to grow wearied in any employment which could help in the least to the salvation of a soul. . . . He was to be found everywhere in Rome, preaching, converting women of evil lives,

> and pleading with rich men to build refuges for unhappy people whose souls were in danger. But you know all this better than I do. . . .
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> Without working many miracles he won for himself the admiration of the whole world. When a man has the holy virtue of prudence [1] in a high degree, God does not find it necessary to make him a great thaumaturge. We do not read that St. Augustine, St. Jerome, St. John Chrysostom, St. Athanasius, and other men of their stamp, worked many miracles. God seems to reserve this power chiefly for those who are but little endowed with natural qualities, that they may attract souls by the marvels they perform, and show forth in this way the greatness of Him whom they loyally serve. So wonderfully did the virtue of prudence shine in our Blessed Father that during long years he never uttered a single word which he might afterwards have wished unsaid. Like St. Paul, he was all things to all men, a Spaniard with Spaniards, an Italian with Italians, a Frenchman with the French, and he loved and treated everybody so well that all, by common accord, looked upon, loved, and praised him as the kindest of fathers.

The Cardinal next deals, at some length, with the spirit of the constitutions which St. Ignatius drew up for his Order, and then goes on to speak about the vows. This is what he says about the vow of obedience from which he had been himself unwillingly set free:

> Our Blessed Father desired his Society to cherish obedience above all other virtues. He had this greatly at heart, and if the glorious St. Francis, enraptured with poverty, used to call it his lady, our Father might have called obedience his mother, his sister, his spouse, so much did he love it, and so ardently did he desire to see it shine in his sons. This obedience is truly the cross of religious men of which Our Lord says, *Qui vult venire post me, abneget semetipsum, tollat crucem suam et sequatur me*. Let us consider, then, how big and long and high and deep this cross is that so we may understand the excellence of the virtue and the perfection it reached in the soul of Ignatius. Some have said that the obedience of the Society extended only to the prescriptions of the Institute. Others have taught that whatever the superior thinks well to impose is comprised in the virtue, but our Blessed Father widened its bounds to include even the superior's known, though unuttered wish. Accordingly, he required each of his subjects so to bend his will into conformity with the will of his

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[1] It is impossible to know what to do with the word *prudentia*. The cardinal virtue of prudence means in Christian spirituality something infinitely finer and richer than the rather unlovable 'cautiousness' or worldly-wisdom implied in the every-day use of the word.

superior that he might be always eager to obey, even when no express order was given, thus following the example of Our Lord who said to His Father, *Quae tibi placita sunt facio semper*. So much for the size of this holy cross of obedience.

The length of the cross is to be estimated by the length of time obedience has to be practised and by the nature of the commands which are its object. Our Blessed Father desired that we should practise it all our lives long, and especially in matters contrary to our natural inclinations, according to the example of our Lord, *qui factus est obediens usque ad mortem, mortem autem crucis*. In truth those who think they can ever have a holiday or retire honourably from the life of obedience, deceive themselves woefully. I, for one, have never read of a holy man who fled or tried to escape from this sacred yoke. Rather do I know that many have avoided, by every means in their power, the office of superior. Thus St. Paphnutius twice ran away from the monastery of which he was abbot, with the sole idea of putting himself under obedience again, and the glorious St. Francis would never leave the house without first having humbly asked the permission and blessing of the Father Guardian. When our Blessed Father was about to be elected General he resisted most strenuously, and offered all manner of excuses. Then, after he had borne the burden of office for some years to everybody's satisfaction, he called the principal Fathers of the Society together one day and with prayers and tears begged them to relieve him of a charge that was too heavy for his shoulders. This was because he longed to go back to the ranks again, and to consecrate the last years of his life to the practice of obedience.

The height of the cross is measured by its extension to the noblest and sublimest powers of our souls. Ignatius would not have us merely execute exteriorly the orders of superiors. No, if we are to be his true sons, we must wish heartily whatever the superior wishes, and judge right whatever he judges right, thus subjecting our own will and judgment to his. Because perfect obedience is the daughter of perfect detachment, our Father desired to see this last virtue practised, even with regard to spiritual things. The holy Founders who preceded him, in their burning zeal for souls used to name such and such a territory as that in which they desired to preach the Gospel at the command of the Pope. But Ignatius kept the habitual indifference of his soul even in this, and assured the Holy Father that the only mission field he wanted for himself and his sons, was the field to which the Vicar of Christ might be pleased to send them. Finally, we can judge how deep the cross of obedience goes by considering the persons to whose will it subjects us. Our Blessed Father prescribed that each one should obey with alacrity not only his superiors and equals but his inferiors and subordinates also. It was thus Our Lord did, submitting Himself, though He was the Ruler of the world, to the

Jewish law, to His parents, to the high-priests, to His disciples, and even to the very ruffians who crucified Him. Was not the glorious St. Francis wont to say that he was ready to obey a novice who was put over him, with as much alacrity and respect as he would the oldest professed Father in the order ? [1]

Such, then, was the style of Bellarmine's famous exhortation. Within a week of its delivery the Cardinal wrote as follows to Father Carminata :

> . . . Here is a fresh bit of news for you. The Congregation of Rites has set up an Apostolic Commission to examine witnesses on the life and miracles of our Blessed Father Ignatius. So we have made the first step on the way to his canonization, and I can tell you it cost me no small labour, for I have addressed the Cardinals of the Congregation several times. All the same, the favour is more owing to Cardinals Aldobrandini and Baronius than to myself. You will have heard from others what was done on the anniversary day of our Father, how your Reverence's friend made a little sermon in the Church to our brethren, behind closed doors ; how Cardinal Baronius kissed the ground at our Father's tomb several times ; how he then, all at once, mounted a ladder and fastened a beautiful picture of our Blessed Father over the tomb, together with two boards bearing ex-votos ; how on the following day in a sermon in the Church of the Vallicella he made some allusions to our Father, calling him always Blessed Ignatius ; and last of all, how in the Congregation of Rites, two days later, he defended what he had done with great success, declaring that his action was entirely spontaneous and that our Fathers had not said a single word to him. Really this good Cardinal is just as much one of the Society as any of us. Pray God for him and still more for me, whose need is the greater.

3. To the end of his life, the canonization of the Founder of his order remained one of Bellarmine's dearest ambitions. Under God, he was chiefly responsible for the success of the cause, though he had been some months in Heaven before the final decree was published. Of course his efforts met with opposition. Francis Pegna, an old foe, addressed a written protest to the cardinals against the popular veneration of Ignatius at the Gesù which had resulted from the exhortation and the action of Baronius. Bellarmine was attacked all through this document for his teaching about the canonization

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[1] This exhortation of 1599 has not been published. Père Le Bachelet gave a French version of it in a private journal in 1923 and there is a résumé of the Latin text in Van Ortroy's *Exhortationes Domesticae*, pp. 309–314.

of saints, and it was even hinted that if the Inquisition were to do its duty, he would find himself hauled before that tribunal. He answered the allegations at some length and with great moderation. After pointing out how seriously his critic had misconstrued his teaching, he continued:

> I think I have been if anything too niggardly in my estimate of the public veneration which may lawfully be paid to holy men who are not yet canonized. I have denied that they can publicly be called saints, or publicly invoked, or named in the litanies or the divine office, or have altars or churches erected in their honour. I have expressly stated that it is not permitted to have pictures of them painted with a nimbus round their heads, nor to keep special feasts in their honour, nor to offer their relics for public veneration. What more, then, does my critic want? You say, he tells me, that it is not wrong to call a man a saint before his canonization. It is not. St. Thomas called Bonaventure a saint while he was still alive, and St. Catherine of Siena, in her letters, continually styles Agnes of Montepulciano a saint, though she was but recently dead and not beatified. What harm is it, then, if I give the name saint to one whom I devoutly believe was a saint?
>
> Ah, but you say, he continues, that the friends of a holy man who has not been canonized may give themselves up to private rejoicing on the anniversary of his death, and keep his picture in their rooms. Of course I said that, and what is more, I do it. Would you have famous warriors and literary men honoured on your walls, and deny the same respect to men who fought the good fight of faith with notable success? . . . I must admit that I was unable to read without indignation what our author writes at the end of his tract, namely, that we are now honouring men who not only have not been canonized, but who were not conspicuous for any great excellence during their lives. . . . If he means Ignatius Loyola, as many people with good reason suspect, then I can tell him that he has done a serious wrong to a great number of holy and religious men who knew Ignatius intimately while he was on earth, and testified on oath after his death that his faith, hope, charity, purity, humility, prayerfulness, and other Christian virtues, were so great and striking that he was held with justice to be the very pattern of perfection.

Blessed Robert rubs in this point very thoroughly, and points out that among others whom the critic injured by his allegation was his Catholic Majesty the King of Spain, inasmuch as that monarch had petitioned for the canonization of Ignatius. That was a very deft little stroke, for Pegna was a Spaniard, and, as his correspondence in the archives of Simancas shows, was most anxious to keep in the good graces of his sovereign.[1]

In 1606 news reached Rome that the Jesuits of Modena were in trouble with the Inquisitor of the city for having hung up a picture of Ignatius in their Church. Bellarmine wrote to the gentleman in question at once:

> My dear Father, I have heard that your Reverence has threatened to go with policemen to seize the picture of the Blessed Father Ignatius in the Jesuit church, as well as the ex-votos which surround it. If you have received a mandate from the Pope or the Holy Office, go, by all means, but I do not think you have received any such authorization, for if you had, I would know, being a Cardinal of the Holy Office myself. Besides, even if there is some irregularity, it is the Bishop's business to deal with it and not the Inquisitor's, as we are taught by the Council of Trent. I thought it would be well, then, to caution your Reverence against hastiness in this affair. Here at Rome the same picture is to be seen in the Society's church surrounded with numerous ex-votos and lighted candles. The Pope himself and the Cardinals of the Inquisition have often seen it, and the present Holy Father has a copy of it hanging in his room. By his orders, the process of canonization is being inaugurated at this very moment. Besides, it is not a new departure to place in churches the pictures of servants of God who have worked miracles after death, and to hang up ex-votos alongside them. Examples of such a practice are not wanting either in Rome or elsewhere. If, in the present case, there is anything which causes your Reverence displeasure, and you should care to let either myself or the General of the Society know about it, you would be acting as a good religious man who is sympathetic towards a community which is only too anxious to do what is right.

It is not easy to procure a man's beatification, however unquestionable his claim may seem. The Founder of the Jesuits was at last raised to the altars in 1606, just half a century after his death, but Bellarmine tells us that had he not then 'begged and implored all the Cardinals of the Congregation, and publicly declared his own opinion at great length, goodness only knows when the beatification would have taken place.'[2] He pronounced many other panegyrics on the Saint besides the one reported above[3] and one of the very last letters of his life was concerned with the canonization of the same dearly-loved Father. On 24 February 1621, Louis XIII of France petitioned Pope Gregory XV to complete the good work done by his predecessor in 1606, and enrol Blessed Ignatius in the Calendar. Bellarmine was extremely touched by this kindly act of the King and could not resist the temptation to thank him personally. On August 5, six weeks before his death, he wrote:

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[1] *Responsio Card. Bellarmini ad calumnias cujusdam scripti anonymi. Auctarium Bellarminianum*, pp. 473–476.

[2] *Autobiography*, n. xlvii.

[3] Two are given in the *Exhortationes Domesticae*, (1605), pp. 296–301; (1606), pp. 302–308.

> Most High and Christian Sovereign, To the many obligations which our Society owes the Crown of France and your Majesty in particular, is now added the favour you do it by strenuously supporting the canonization of Blessed Ignatius, its Founder. In union with the whole Society, I thank your Majesty from the bottom of my heart for so many acts of kindness. The Society and your servant are under an obligation to pray to God unceasingly for your Majesty's happiness and welfare, and I am sure the Blessed Ignatius will do the same in Heaven in return for the honour which your Majesty has done him on earth.[1]

4. There was another Founder, too, besides St. Ignatius, whose cause Blessed Robert championed with the chivalrous generosity of a great gentleman. It is one of the finest episodes in his life, and if he had nothing else to his credit, it would do by itself for a monument. In the sixteenth century there was an abbey of Cistercian monks near Toulouse, called the Abbey of Feuillants. Its superior apostatized and a holy man named John Baptist de la Barrière was appointed in his place. At once a severe reform of discipline and manners began, the new Abbot's ambition being to restore the primitive Cistercian rule in its austere beauty. Some of the monks agreed and some did not, so with the permission of Clement VIII, de la Barrière separated from the Order of St. Bernard and founded a new congregation which came to be known as the Congregation of the Feuillants. Besides being a man of great sanctity, Abbot John was also a man of great character and influence. During the bad times of the League, he remained true to Henry III, and it was at that monarch's request that his reformed rule was canonically approved by the Holy See. It was not good for one's reputation in those days to side with the King, and it has always been dangerous to try to revive the forgotten fervour of a religious order's infancy. Very soon John Baptist was surrounded with enemies. Damaging reports of every description poured into Rome. He was an

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[1] St. Ignatius was canonized on 12 March 1622, six months after the death of Bellarmine.

ignorant religious; he caused Masses to be sung at four o'clock in the afternoon; he would never allow a Low Mass to be said; his austerity was a mere pretence for which he made up by feeding on the best of everything in his room; he was the son of a heretic and had preached erroneous doctrine; he was the friend and adviser of Henry III; he had condemned the popular rebellion against the King; he had inspired the murder of the Duke of Guise; he had said Mass for Henry after his assassination; he was negotiating with Navarre, and he was, in fine, a thoroughly mischievous and disreputable monk who ought to be unmercifully suppressed.

Abbot John met the storm, as only a man of heroic sanctity could have met it, with the *tacebat* of his Master. To all his enemies' ravings his only reply was, 'I am a very great sinner.' This humble silence gave them a fresh handle, and they so prevailed with the judge who had been appointed to investigate the case that he ended by believing all the calumnies. De la Barrière had his title of 'Founder' cancelled, was deprived of the administration of his Abbey, and declared forever incapable of any dignity or authority in the congregation. That was not all. He was further suspended from his priestly functions for a time, and confined as a prisoner to Rome, where he had to present himself each month to the officers of the Inquisition.[1] In 1596 some of his fellow-religious tried very hard to bring about his rehabilitation but their efforts only made matters worse, for the poor victim's sentence was confirmed by a fresh condemnation.

The prospects, then, were as black as black could be when suddenly Cardinal Bellarmine appeared in the story. The Duchess of Santa Fiore, one of the greatest ladies in Italy, had been under the spiritual direction of de la Barrière and was convinced of his innocence. Being a de Nobili of Montepulciano, she felt that she had a claim on her fellow-citizen Bellarmine, so when he was raised to the purple in 1599, she had recourse to him as to an advocate whose justice and charity would leave no stone unturned to right the grievous wrong that had been done. She was not mistaken. When the new Cardinal heard her account, he immediately expressed a wish to visit the Abbot on some pretext that had nothing to do with the affair. Saints are connoisseurs of sanctity, and Bellarmine realized before the conversation had gone very far that he was in the presence, not only of an innocent man, but of a great servant of God. All was plain sailing then. John Baptist de la Barrière would be rescued if Robert Francis Bellarmine had to die in the attempt. There is a very interesting old manuscript life of the Abbot in the Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris, which gives us the sequel of the story : [1]

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[1] Bazy, *Le Vénérable Jean de la Barrière*, Toulouse, 1885, pp. 313 sqq., 370.

> He [Bellarmine] went in search of the Pope and told him with tears in his eyes that he had just come from a visit to John in chains, thus comparing the Abbot with St. John the Baptist who also suffered innocently. Then he repeated the conversation he had had with him, and the Pope hearing it became very glad and very sad at the same time ; glad because of the hope which the Cardinal gave him of being able to clear the Abbot, and sad because he feared he had been deceived and had cruelly treated a holy man who was formerly his dear friend. He confessed to the Cardinal that he had had no peace since the condemnation of the Abbot, especially after seeing him kneel at his feet with such gentle resignation and humility. Then he ordered Bellarmine to collect all the documents of the trial, and gave him fullest faculties to absolve and rehabilitate the prisoner should he find him innocent.
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> The Cardinal read and examined all the documents with the attention which the case merited. As a bishop of great eminence in administration, who had enjoyed the Pope's confidence for several years, had judged and condemned de la Barrière, there was now the alternative of judging and condemning this bishop or of rendering the Abbot more infamous than ever by confirming anew the two previous sentences against him. The Cardinal was very surprised to find that the process was entirely composed of frivolous or unsupported charges which would have deceived no judge who was at once clear-sighted and impartial. He did not discover a single line in the Abbot's defence, and the only answers which this good man made to the accusations appeared to be that he was a great sinner, capable of committing all sorts of crimes, and deserving of every description of punishment.
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> Bellarmine was not satisfied with these observations. He went several times to the two monasteries of the Feuillants in Rome, where resided many of those who had lodged accusations against the Abbot. Each of them was examined, both with regard to the time preceding the condemnation and the time that followed it. In the first case, the Cardinal found the traces of a once active hostility in a few of the men but even this lacked any solid justification. In the second case, that is with regard to the eight years of the Abbot's disgrace, he found that everybody was agreed. Even those who had formerly persecuted him were forced, like the others, to sing his praises, avowing that he had

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[1] Fonds français, MS. 11564, f. 471^{v}–479.

borne his trial like a saint, without a single word of complaint or annoyance or excuse. He was always tranquil, gentle, humble, modest, affable to everybody, and much more so to his persecutors than to others, respectful and obedient to his superiors, so exact and regular as to put the novices to shame, austere as he had formerly been in his Abbey at Feuillants though he was dying on his feet, and always ready to praise the action of superiors whenever he could do so without telling a lie.

When the Cardinal had concluded his investigations, he reported to the Pope, who was greatly delighted. In order that the rehabilitation might take place with as much éclat as possible, he instructed Bellarmine to announce his conclusions in a Congregation of Cardinals which was gathered together specially for this purpose. The Pope, seeing with pleasure the unanimous admiration which the report evoked, exclaimed that he doubted whether St. Bernard himself would have suffered with so much gentleness, patience, and humility, had he been calumniated, condemned, and disgraced for such a long time and under such ignominious circumstances. Then he ordered Bellarmine to rehabilitate the Abbot so gloriously that he, the Pope, might be able to put from his mind the remorseful thought of having condemned him so cruelly. The Cardinal, who was as keenly desirous of this as the Pope himself, could not wait to comply with the prescribed forms. The very next morning he wrote to the Abbot, in his own hand, an account of all that had happened. The messenger who brought the letter found that the man to whom it was addressed was saying Mass, and as he had been told that the Abbot took a long time over Mass, he gave the letter to the server and went away. The server placed it on the altar thinking that the Abbot would take it at the end. But after the Communion the good man lost sight of everything, including the altar itself, and so the note remained behind. In the sacristy the server asked him whether he should fetch it but he said there was no hurry as another priest was saying Mass at that altar, and then he went off to some hiding-place to pray, as was his custom. As he could not be found, the letter was taken to the superior, who, seeing the Cardinal's arms on the seal, kept it to deliver it himself. Now the Abbot knew that the letter was from Cardinal Bellarmine, for he was aware that his Lordship had arranged to read his report to the Cardinals and the Pope the previous evening, and easily guessed that the letter was to notify him of the Holy Father's decision. Yet, though it was a question of life or death for him, of glorious acquittal or of more terrible condemnation, he was not in the least impatient to learn which was his fate. Self-love must surely have been altogether dead in his heart.

A few days later Cardinal Bellarmine directed the two communities of Feuillants to meet in the sacristy of the Monastery of St. Bernard. He went there himself and, after taking his place, called up the Abbot. Seeing that he was about to fall on his knees the Cardinal raised him up, embraced him tenderly, kissed him with tears in his eyes, and made him sit down at his side above all the other Fathers. After a little discourse, which was a panegyric of his patience, he caused to be read the sentence of his glorious rehabilitation, which the Cardinal himself had drawn up with all the proofs of his innocence. Then he told him publicly that the Pope had re-instated him in all the offices and dignities which he had filled before, and absolved him from all censures and penances, with one exception only. The exception was that he must not leave Rome without the Holy Father's permission, but this was made with a very different intention from that which had formerly inspired it. Now the Pope's only reason for keeping him a prisoner was that the example of his heroic patience might not be lost to the Eternal City.

That is the end of the story. On 25 April 1600, immediately after his earthly triumph, the humble servant of God went to a better one in Heaven. More than a century later the Abbot General of the Reformed Cistercians, Dom Balthazar of St. Philip Neri, addressed the following petition to Pope Clement XI: 'Our Congregation which was helped and favoured so generously by Bellarmine cannot now refrain from begging your Holiness most earnestly, in token of our gratitude, to number him in the ranks of the Blessed.' [1]

5. That same year, 1600, brought the Cardinal into touch with men of every description from paupers to princes. The pilgrims who flocked to Rome for the Jubilee made a point of seeing him, so all day and every day the perspiring Guidotti spent his time announcing the Prince of this, the Bishop of that, and the Lord Abbot of the other. Some of them troubled the poor Cardinal's humility for, in their great respect for him, they would insist on approaching on their knees.[2] Among the more interesting of the visitors was a man named Justus Chauvin or Calvin, a relative of the celebrated John. Baronius was extremely kind to him, and Justus in gratitude assumed his name instead of the evil-sounding one to which he had been born. On his return to Germany, this new Baronius wrote to Bellarmine, 4 December 1600, a letter which shows that the extravagances of 'Euphuism' were not confined to England:

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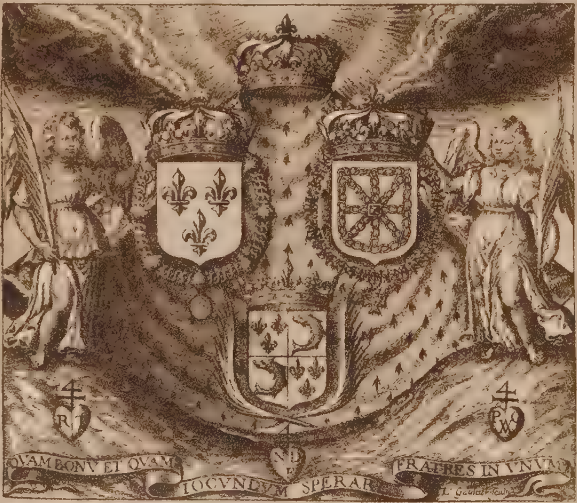
[1] *Epistolae Postulatorum*, lviii, 31 July 1713. Besides the account of de la Barrière's rehabilitation which has been given above from the Bibliothèque Nationale, there is an independent narrative in Caretti's *Santorale S. Ordinis Cisterciensis*. Turin, 1708, p. 607.

[2] *Summarium*, n. 5, p. 4.

DISPVTATIONES ROBERTI BELLARMINI POLITIANI,
S. R. E. CARDINALIS,
# DE CONTROVERSIIS CHRISTIANÆ FIDEI,
Aduerſus huius temporis Hæreticos;
Quatuor Tomis comprehenſæ.

EDITIO PLVRIMIS LOCIS AVCTA ET EMENDATA, ex correctorio libello ab Auctore vulgato Romæ, Ann. 1607.


R I
P W
N D E
QVAM BONV ET QVAM
IOCVNDVM SPERAR
FRATRES IN VNVM
L. Gaultier sculp.

PARISIIS,
Ex Officinis TRI-ADELPHORVM Bibliopolarum,
via Iacobæa, & in monte D. Hilarij.

M. DC. VIII.
CVM PRIVILEGIO REGIS.

Thou, in very truth, Robert Bellarmine, most illustrious Cardinal, art he whom my soul worships and venerates, whom my heart loves and longs to have for a friend. Thou art the man who has delivered me from death and more than Cimmerian darkness. I pay my vows to thee, and will celebrate and praise thy immortal name for ever. Who, you ask, is it who sings this unlooked-for paean and raises a joyful shout like pilgrim mariners in sight of home? It is I, Lord Cardinal, I thy great debtor, who hail thee as the sweet solace and peace of my soul. If I have found favour in thy eyes, then attend and see the wonderful works of God, listen to the glorious fruits of thy labours. Behold, in days past you sat down and prepared a medicine for sick men whom the locusts of Hell, foretold by the Apostle, had wounded with the stings of false dogmas, or whom the dropsy of false wisdom had puffed up fatally. You sat down and prepared this medicine with your disputations; . . . and how did I take it, the most wretchedly ill of all sufferers? I laughed, as was my wont, yet by way of experiment tasted the draught and then drank it down. Just as happens to some patients, the remedy at first disturbed my mind. Some time after, by its hidden virtue it struggled with the disease and caused me to sweat out the poison of my soul. Then only did I realize how grievously I had been infected. Day by day, I began to grow stronger and, blessed be God, soon entirely recovered my health. Now I have no greater desire than to cast off the rags of my former errors, to leave the lazar-house of heresy and to walk in the citadel of the Church with Catholics, in the sincerity of faith. See then, Bellarmine, what a health-giving medicine your works have been to me! I was in the grip of a perilous disease and you cured me, I was dying pitifully and you gave me life; yea, I was in my grave and you roused me from its dust and placed me in the Kingdom of God. How shall I ever thank you enough, for your gift to me is more precious than all the treasures in the world? . . .[1]

Justus had been professor of Protestant theology at the University of Heidelburg for nine years. Whatever we may think of his epistolary style, he was a very distinguished man and his conversion had far-reaching consequences. Bellarmine acknowledged his astonishing outburst on 18 January 1601:

Illustrious Sir, I heartily rejoice and thank the Father of light with all earnestness, that by the strong grace of His Holy Spirit your heart has been turned to the love of the truth. That Divine Providence was pleased to make use of my books for this end is, believe me, a subject of exultation on my part because of the fruit they have borne. But it does not make me proud, for I know too well my own deficiencies, nor am I unaware that 'the power of God is perfected in infirmity,' according to the Apostle, which means that the power of God shines out the more clearly in proportion to the weakness of the instruments which He employs. This knowledge of the true Church is indeed a great gift of God, for in it alone are men at real peace with Him and in possession of solid hope of Eternal Life. It is the pearl of great price, which the man who finds sells his all in order to buy. But we must not be afraid that we shall perish of hunger and cold, if for the sake of our faith we have had to relinquish earthly treasures. Seek first the Kingdom of God and His justice, says Our Lord, and all these things shall be added unto you. Even if we be stripped of our possessions without hope of recovery, we ought not therefore to devote ourselves with less zeal to the profession and preaching of the true faith, for the sufferings of this time are not worthy to be compared with the glory to come that shall be revealed in us.

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[1] Justi Calvini, *Epistolae*, vi, p. 39. Mayence, 1601; *Summarium additionale*, p. 47.

The Holy Father is full of sympathy for you, and will soon see to it that neither you, nor those dependent on you, lack what is necessary to enable you to live up to your station. But if the settlement should be unduly delayed, owing to the distance of your country and the heavy business with which the worthy Pontiff is daily and always overwhelmed, remember, I beg you, what Moses used to say to the people when in distress: 'The Lord God trieth you that it may appear whether you love Him.' As for myself, I will do my very best to help, both by my prayers to God that He may perfect the good work which He has begun in your soul, and by my intercession with men that they may afford temporal relief to those whom they see are called by our Heavenly Father to an eternal Kingdom. Farewell, illustrious Sir, be strengthened in the Lord, do manfully, and cast all your solicitude on God for He has care of us.[1]

A letter which the Cardinal addressed to the Bishop of Verdun during the year of Jubilee, shows how he spent that holy time:

Most Illustrious and Right Reverend Lord, Would that I were in God's eyes such as your charity has painted me in your heart; would that I so abounded in merits that I could admit others to a share of them instead of being a destitute mendicant; and would, above all, that during this Holy Year I could have seen you in Rome, have embraced you, and enjoyed your conversation. We could have visited the holy places together, washed the feet of Christ in the person of the pilgrims who crowd to the City, and in their person served our Redeemer at table. . . . But your Lordship,

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[1] *Epistolae familiares*, xi, pp. 27–30.

fidelis servus et prudens that you are, elected to stay at home for the good of your flock, rather than seek your private consolation. Well done! Had I been in charge of a diocese I should certainly have followed your Lordship's example. . . .[1] '

6. Pope Clement was a very holy man, and the charity and piety of his heart found plenty of scope during the Jubilee. Bellarmine and Baronius were his two regular attendants whenever he went about doing good, as for example, when he visited the hospital of the Trinità dei Pellegrini to wash the pilgrims' feet.[2] That act was not a mere formality for the good people had not come to Rome by Blue Trains. The Pope delighted, too, to make his Cardinal friends preach before him in his private chapel. Bellarmine regarded this work in the light of a strict duty, and also considered that he was bound in conscience to preach regularly in his own church of Santa Maria in Via, small and out of the way though it was.[3] No sooner was he appointed Cardinal, with this church as his titular, than he began to inquire most carefully 'ad quid teneatur Cardinalis Sanctae Mariae in Via?'[4]

When it was a question of duty, his gentle, deferential manner dropped from him completely, and he became as rigid as steel. On the death of the Cardinal of Aragon, the Pope presented him with that dignitary's rich benefice on the island of Procida. Bellarmine immediately sent Guidotti to visit the Abbey and set right anything that required attention, for he knew that abbeys *in commendam* often fared badly at the hands of their absentee owners. Guidotti reported that there were two thousand souls under the jurisdiction of the abbot. This piece of news decided his master's policy. Considering it impossible, if non-resident, to ensure that such a large number should be properly looked after, he went straight to the Pope and resigned the gift without more ado. Clement insisted on his retaining it, however, but could only win the Cardinal's consent by appointing of his own authority a perpetual vicar who should have charge of the flock, and who should be bound to reside in their midst. Then the Archbishop of Naples intervened and saved him further scruples about the matter by laying claim to the benefice and winning his case in the Pontifical courts. The day the verdict was announced, Bellarmine set out for Procida and there, with the greatest good-will and not a little relief, handed over the charge to his successful rival.

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[1] *Epistolae familiares*, x, pp. 25–27.

[2] *Statuta della Ven. Archconfrat. della Santissima Trinità*, Rome, 1821, p. 15.

[3] Bentivoglio, *Memorie* (Milan, 1807), l. II, c. i, p. 194.

[4] *Auctarium Bellarminianum*, p. 499.

Before the end of the summer 1601, the Cardinal wrote at the Pope's earnest request a document in which the zeal of his heart is beautifully reflected. Clement said that he wanted to be told the plain, unvarnished truth about the duties of his sacred office and his manner of fulfilling them, and Bellarmine, who was as simple and straight as a child, took him at his word. Accordingly he drew up a paper in which, under twenty heads, he compared the actual state of ecclesiastical affairs and of the Court of Rome with the ideal set forth by the Council of Trent.[1] From these heads he then selected six, all referring to ecclesiastical dignitaries and superiors, for fuller treatment. When he had completed his task he presented the document to Clement, very reverently on bended knees, assuring him that no eye but his own had seen it and that a second copy did not exist. His Holiness might make just what use of it he chose, or put it in the fire, and no one would be the wiser. After some time, the Pope returned the paper to its author with marginal notes in his own handwriting. These notes, which are chiefly answers to the strictures of his admonitor, were suggested in great measure by no less a person than Baronius.[2]

Somehow or other the document became common property at the Vatican before its return to Bellarmine. Thirty-nine years after his death, the Master of the Sacred Palace gave Fuligatti permission to publish it as an appendix to the *Epistolae familiares*. There were several subsequent and independent editions, the best being Père Le Bachelet's in his oft-quoted *Auctarium*.[3] It is entitled 'On the primary duty of the Sovereign Pontiff.' After laying down that in the triple character of the Pope as Supreme Pastor, Bishop of Rome, and temporal Sovereign of the States of the Church, the first office is necessarily in every way the highest, Bellarmine insists that all its duties could be worthily fulfilled if the Pope would but choose the right kind of bishops for the various sees. Should these bishops or the clergy over whom they ruled disappoint his expectations, the responsibility, at all events, would not then rest with the Pope. But if he chose unfit candidates or if he neglected to see that they did their duty, then God would demand at his hands the souls that might be lost through his carelessness :

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[1] Bartoli, *Vita*, p. 463.

[2] Calenzio, *La Vita e gli scritti del Card. C. Baronio*, Rome, 1907, pp. 602 sqq.

[3] Pp. 513–518. The paper runs to a little over 3,000 words.

> This consideration frightens me so much [continues the Cardinal] that there is no one in the world I pity more than the Pope. . . . What St. John Chrysostom wrote so feelingly about Bishops, namely that only a few of them would be saved because of the extreme difficulty of giving a good account of the souls committed to their care, certainly applies much more to the occupants of St. Peter's Throne. Nor ought we to flatter ourselves with talk of a good conscience or a right intention, since St. Paul says, *Nihil mihi conscius sum*, *sed non in hoc justificatus sum*, and St. James strikes terror into us with that dreadful verse, *Quicunque totam legem servaverit*, *offendat autem in uno*, *factus est omnium reus.*

To this Clement replied that the thought affrighted him also, but that he found consolation in the fact that after all he could only choose *men* and that even Our Lord, after a whole night in prayer, had chosen Judas. Bellarmine then proceeds to develop his six points, the first of which was the long vacancies in episcopal sees. After quoting St. Leo, Innocent III, and St. Gregory, he says : 'It is difficult to explain in a few words the harm which these widowed Churches suffer, the vices into which the shepherdless flocks run headlong, the wilderness which the vineyard becomes that has no husbandman to tend it.' Clement owns that he has been at fault and is still at fault in this respect but urges the difficulty of finding suitable subjects.

> Second point—the promotion of bishops not possessing the necessary qualifications. Churches ought to be provided with good men, not men with good Churches. . . . The Council of Trent declares in plain words that all those who are in any way responsible for the appointment of bishops commit mortal sin if they do not choose the men whom they consider best fitted for the office and most likely to be of good service. . . . I confess that I have been terrified when, two or three times in consistories, I have seen persons promoted to cardinalatial sees, who from their advanced age, or bad health, or lack of episcopal virtues, were such as could scarcely be considered useful or fit at all to have the charge of souls. But custom demands, you may say, that these Churches be given to the Cardinal Priests, in order of seniority, whether they possess the necessary qualifications or not. I do not think that custom would ever persuade us to entrust our bodies to aged physicians, if through senility or any other cause they were

> less capable of doing us good. If we take such precautions when our perishable bodily health is at stake, why will we not take them for the sake of immortal souls? I pass over the fact that nowadays many are ambitious of the episcopal dignity, or, rather, openly ask for and demand it, not knowing, as Our Lord says, what they ask. . . . How can he be anything but unworthy who thus thrusts himself to the fore? St. Gregory tells us that according to the right order, men should be sought for the episcopate and not seek it.

The Pope took these strictures in the best possible spirit. 'This matter causes us constant anxiety,' he said, 'because if we refuse the dignity to all who ask for it or are proposed by others, we do not know how we are going to fill the vacant sees, especially the poorer ones. If your Lordship has any suggestion to make in this connection, we should be very glad to hear and make use of it.'

> Third point—the absence of bishops from their dioceses. What is the good of electing a suitable man if he is never to be at home? The Council of Trent declares that by divine precept bishops must know their flocks, preach the Word of God to them, and feed them by the administration of the sacraments and the example of all good works. . . . Moreover, the same Council lays it down that cardinals who are ordinaries outside Rome must reside personally in their dioceses.

Clement's comment on this is a rueful one: 'We admit that we have sinned, inasmuch as we have been too easy in giving bishops leave to come to Rome. Once in Rome it is almost impossible to get them out again.' Bellarmine continues:

> I see such great desolation in the Churches of Italy now as perhaps has not been witnessed for many a year. Residence seems to be accounted binding neither by divine nor human law. In the first place, there are at the present day eleven non-resident cardinals who are bishops of sees. Then there are many bishops who act as apostolic nuncios, and some of these have not seen their dioceses for several years. Others, again, have neglected the care of the souls committed to them in order to play at being civil magistrates, though by what reasons they justify themselves I confess I cannot imagine. Finally, there are some who have left their sheep in the wilderness, and are wasting their time uselessly in Rome or spending it on business that could be done quite well by others. I admit, of course, that some bishops are excused from residence by obedience, and I am not denying the Supreme Pontiff power to grant such exemptions for good reasons and a limited

period. But I do not know whether it is pleasing to God that so large a number of bishops should be absent for so long a time and with such detriment to their flocks. If those bishops who are always in their dioceses, working might and main for the good of souls to the exclusion of every other occupation, yet find it difficult to carry out all the duties of their office, as St. Augustine tells us was his own experience (*Conf.* x, 4), and as is plain from the Apology of St. Gregory Nazianzen, the Dialogue of St. John Chrysostom on the Priesthood, and the pastoral admonition of St. Gregory, if this be so, are they not labouring under a serious delusion who think that they can fulfil their episcopal obligations while far away from their flocks and engrossed in other business?[1]

The fourth abuse against which the Cardinal inveighs is 'ecclesiastical polygamy,' or as we should say, pluralism. St. Thomas and the Council of Trent are his two great weapons, but he appears to have been a little too free with his strictures, for the only pluralism he could point to was that of six cardinals who possessed, in addition to their titular see, a second one 'in ordinary.' That he should have argued so strongly against even this very mild departure from the strictest principles shows how deeply he had the welfare of souls at heart.

Fifth point—too great leniency in permitting the transfer of bishops from one diocese to another. According to the canons and the custom of the early Church, the translation of bishops ought not to be allowed except for reasons of necessity or when they would be more useful in a new sphere. Dioceses were not instituted for the advantage of bishops but bishops for dioceses. The practice is also contrary to the example of the saints. Thus St. Gregory the Great never changed nor permitted the change of a single bishop, and though, as St. Bernard informs us, St. Malachy was forced to leave his small diocese for the metropolitan see of Armagh, yet he would go only on the express condition that when he had settled the business confided to him in his new office, he should be permitted to return to his former diocese. John, Bishop of Rochester, the Cardinal and martyr, was often asked by his King to accept a wealthier see, but would never consent to desert his first Church though it was one of the poorest. Finally, the practice is unreasonable, because a bishop is wedded to his Church by a spiritual tie stronger than any carnal one, and such a tie ought not easily to be dissolved. Indeed, *can* it be dissolved except by God or the Vicar of God declaring his Master's will? And who will believe that it is God's will to pronounce such a divorce, when the only reasons for it are some temporal honour or gain, especially when it cannot be done without harm to souls, as experience teaches us? Bishops can scarcely love dioceses which they hope soon to desert for richer pastures. . . .

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[1] How utterly disinterested Bellarmine was is shown by the names of the eleven Cardinal Bishops whom he desired to see away from Rome. He gives the names himself, and they include some of his dearest friends such as Valier, Bishop of Verona, Tarugi, Archbishop of Siena, Bandini, Archbishop of Fermo, etc. The Pope defended them stoutly. Valier has a coadjutor, he said, Tarugi is ill, Bandini resides, for his see is in the province of which he is legate, a fourth has come only for the Holy Year, a fifth dare not go home on account of the troubles awaiting him, and so on.

The sixth and last point is the resignation of the episcopal charge without a legitimate excuse. If there is a strong tie between a bishop and his diocese, a tie almost too close to be dissolved as the canons teach, how is it that we see it broken with such ease every day? Some men resign their sees but keep the revenues, like a man who should divorce his wife and yet hold tight to her dowry. Others, when they have grown rich on their episcopal revenues, give up the charge that they may devote themselves to yet more lucrative employments, or renounce it in favour of their relatives that under such a pretence they may still keep possession of the sanctuary of God. There are men, too, who prefer to be mere *referendarii* or clerics at the Court of Rome rather than high-priests away from it, and finally we hear such excuses offered for resignation as the unhealthiness of the climate, the poverty of the diocese, or the indocility of the people. God knows whether these are legitimate grounds and whether the bishops who urge them are seeking what is their own or what is Jesus Christ's.

These are the points, Holy Father, which I considered it my bounden duty to represent to your Holiness for the relief of my conscience. They are written out of the sincerity of my heart, so I beg you most earnestly, with all reverence and submission, to read them with a favourable eye.

Pope Clement's final comment on the document is heroically meek: 'The few hurried answers we have set down here are not given *ad excusandas excusationes in peccatis* but that your Lordship may look with an eye of compassion on the difficulties which have entangled us and brought us into such trouble. For we avow that not only in these matters but in many others too, nay, in everything we have sinned, and in nothing have we done or are we doing our duty. Beseech Almighty God then, that He would either help us by His divine and most efficacious grace, or as we should prefer, that He would free us from this mortal coil [*mortali vinculo*] and put another in our place who would worthily fulfil all the duties of his office.'

7. From a mass of documents which he possessed, Bartoli made a careful summary of the Cardinal's ideas on matters related to those in the paper presented to Clement VIII:

He would have wished that the peculiar, special, and constant business of the Vicar of Christ should be about the interests of Christ; and just as the spiritual is of its nature greater than the temporal, so should the spiritual charge always have the preference. The Vicar of Christ upon earth should be entirely occupied, as his Master would be were He visibly amongst us, in seeking, hearing, procuring means to introduce the Faith into idolatrous lands and other neglected parts of the globe, and once introduced, to spread and establish it. Nor should he have less care of the heretics nearer home than of the heathen in far distant lands, considering how they might be brought back to the true Church and how out of his Apostolic charity he might provide for those who became Catholics. The neglect of such succour was to the Cardinal a daily source of the utmost grief. He had but little himself and all he had he gave. He was always begging, especially for poor exiles whose only hope was in their Mother, the Church of Rome. . . .

He would have wished the College of Cardinals to be reduced to smaller proportions, and an allowance to be given to each of its members sufficient to make them independent of foreign subsidies. He would also have had every possible care taken to secure from all Christendom the most distinguished and deserving men as candidates for the purple, so that the Apostolic College might become a nursery of great Popes. . . . He considered that the Cardinals who had titular Churches in Rome should have entrusted to them the duty of seeing to and visiting the quarters in which their Churches stood, in order to prevent scandals and sweep away public abuses. He was very much concerned about the fees which were exacted by the Chancery, especially for dispensations and the canonization of saints, and desired greatly to see them reduced to a moderate and reasonable figure. He did not approve of the sale of judicial offices, a method of raising money that had been introduced by Sixtus V, and he wished to see entirely prohibited the exorbitant usury of the Jews. But his chief anxiety and the thing which he deemed of, perhaps, the greatest importance was the choice of bishops. He desired that extraordinary care should be exercised in their selection and demanded that this should be based solely on merit and holiness.[1]

Some time in 1600 or 1601, Bellarmine wrote a short paper which he called *De Reformatione*. It has twenty points and may have been the first draft of the memorial on the primary duty of the Holy See to which Bartoli refers, but whatever its origin or purpose it is singularly instructive on the spirit of its author:

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[1] Bartoli, *Vita*, pp. 501 sqq., where he quotes the Roman Process of 1622, and the evidence of Cardinal Ubaldini and Father Eudaemon-Joannes. Many of the points here signalized are referred to in an autograph document quoted in the next section.

1°. The directions of the Council of Trent should be carried out in everything.

2°. The number of Cardinal Priests should be reduced to 24, 25, or 28, as they were of old. No dispensation should be given from the canonical age of 30 years, except in the case of great princes when the plain advantage of the Church demands this. A bull should be published concerning the election of the Pope by secret ballot.

3°. Bishops should be given all the privileges conceded them by the Council of Trent. They should be freed from the authority of the *Auditor Camerae*, compelled to reside in their dioceses, be refused pensions, honoured as true brothers, and have precedence in Papal functions of the Governor of the City and other officials. One day a week should be set apart for their audiences. They should not be elected as a favour to petitioners, but the Pope should obtain secret information from all the provinces about the most distinguished men resident in them.

It would take too long to quote all the numbers, which deal with such diverse matters as the reform of Regulars, the privileges of Secular Priests, reserved cases, censures, benefices, pensions, fees to the Congregations, etc.

7°. The burdens of the citizens of the Papal States should be reduced in order that the political rule of the Church may serve as a model to all princes. If, as a consequence, the position and dignity of the Pope cannot be maintained, then the number of courtiers, military guards, cavalry, and foot-soldiers, ought to be cut down, and relatives ought not to be given such large pensions but only such as would keep them from poverty.

12°. Consistories should be treated as serious affairs. The cardinals ought to be asked for advice, and be bound in conscience to say exactly what they think. They should also be given time for reflection, especially before the election of new members to their ranks.

13°. The Pope's first care should be to set in order his own Court and private behaviour. He should watch vigilantly over his diocese, which includes all the parishes of the City, should visit them at least once in person, and see that the Titulars did the same regularly. He ought to preach in each of the Churches, and if this be impossible on account of old age, he should write the sermons and instruct a deacon to read them publicly. Then it would be well to have them printed in Latin and Italian. It is his duty to observe the conduct of bishops with great care and assiduously to warn and correct them, etc. Finally he should keep a strict eye on his temporal dominions and their government, but this rather through his representatives than personally. He ought not to consider himself as a temporal Prince but as a Bishop, nor permit himself to be called *Dominus Noster*. That title belongs to Christ, and does not accord with the Pope's other title, *Servus Servorum*.[1] He ought to allow the title 'Holy Father' only because it is his duty to live up to it, and he should set others an example of frugal, modest living, shunning luxury as the greatest evil. The propagation of the Faith ought to be his chief concern, and on this rather than on material buildings he should spend the money of the Church.

14°. He ought to think seriously of expelling prostitutes from the City, as St. Louis expelled them from Paris. It is a shameful thing that the Holy City, wherein is the head and fount of religion, should provide such ample opportunities for the evil passions of men. Adulterers, blasphemers, and those guilty of sodomy, ought to be punished with extreme severity according to the law of God in the Old Testament.

20°. The scandal of selling matrimonial dispensations ought to be entirely abolished. If the ruling of the Council of Trent were observed that such dis-

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[1] The *Auctarium* (pp. 520–521) contains a separate piece on this point, 'De titulis Summi Pontificis.' There was a growing custom in those days of applying excessively grand titles to the Pope. Bellarmine's old enemy, Pegna, even defended the style, *Dominus Deus* [i.e. vice Dei] *Noster Papa*, but the Cardinal was totally opposed to any titles except those sanctioned by long custom or which merely summed up the nature of the Pontifical office.

> pensations should be granted without charge, then it would be easy to observe the two other conditions, namely that they should be granted only rarely, and for good reasons.[1]

8. The Cardinal's correspondence at this period shows how much a part of him were the counsels he gave. Having heard promising reports of the virtue and deserts of a certain Polish priest, he immediately set to work with the greatest energy to have this good man promoted to a vacant see. After the event, he wrote thus to the Bishop elect:

> I know that the diocese to which you are now called is very large and full of difficulties. I cannot bring myself to do other than compassionate you sincerely and to beseech God that He would deign to supply you with strength equal to the burden. I offer you no congratulations at present, conscious, as I am, rather of the additional dangers and labours which have fallen to you, than of your increase of honours and wealth. Hereafter will be the time for congratulations, when the Prince of Pastors comes with an imperishable crown and says to you, 'Well done!'[2]

On 8 September 1600 it was the Bishop of Vilna's turn.

> I have learned from the letters of the Apostolic Nuncio in Poland that, in addition to the other good intentions with which God has inspired your Lordship, you are thinking of founding a College in Vilna for the education of priests destined to supply the spiritual needs of the Ruthenian people. For such a good beginning of your pastoral care I thank God from the bottom of my heart, and I strongly counsel your Lordship to put the design into execution without a moment's delay. . . . I write thus, not because I have the slightest doubt of your zeal, but that my urging may help you to carry out still more willingly what you have willingly begun. . . . Good-bye, best of Pastors, and help me, your devoted friend, with your prayers to God.[3]

Count John of Reitberg, who had restored Catholicism in eastern Friesland, received the following letter:

> Most Illustrious Count, Your communication, which reached me at the beginning of this year (1602), caused me the greatest joy. There is no news I receive more greedily than that which tells me of a revival of the Catholic faith in a place where it was completely dead. I thank God, therefore, that He has deigned to elect your Highness to bring about a beginning of salvation in your

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[1] Le Bachelet, *Auctarium Bellarminianum*, pp. 518–520.

[2] *Epistolae familiares*, lv, pp. 11–13.

[3] *L.c.*, v, pp. 13–15.

country—a land that seemed lost for ever—and thus to make our souls brim over with spiritual joy. For I can distinguish in your Highness the solid grounds of an unfeigned faith, of a thorough love of God, and what is rarely found in Princes, of a deep humility, so that I confidently hope to see my Illustrious Lord John not merely Count, as he is in fact, but a sort of second Apostle of East Friesland. That is a glory far exceeding any regal or imperial renown. As regards affairs at Court, the Supreme Pontiff will himself write to the Emperor and the Nuncio. I, too, shall write to the latter because he is a very intimate friend of mine, and will be sure to take to heart whatever is suggested to him in your name. I beg God Our Lord to give you and your noble lady, daily, more and more of His Holy Spirit, and to kindle His flame so strongly in your hearts that no force of the winds and rains of earthly persecutions may ever be able to extinguish it. I pray your Highness to believe me completely at your service. If you should need my assistance in any way, write with the greatest freedom and you will always find either what you ask, or the most entire good will on my part.[1]

The next two letters show the Cardinal in one of his common rôles, defending a man who had been treated with gross injustice. A canon of Breslau named Bonaventure Han had been elected Bishop of the city by the unanimous vote of the Cathedral Chapter. Another canon named Paul Adalbert intrigued against him, and having ingratiated himself with the Emperor Rudolph, succeeded in diverting the coveted mitre to his own head. Paul died just a year after his nomination by the Court and then another imperial protégé was chosen over the head of Han, the rightful Bishop. This holy and persecuted ecclesiastic fell into dire poverty and had even to leave the city, owing to the opposition in high places. It was at this crisis that Bellarmine came into his life.

I did not answer your second letter at once [wrote the Cardinal] because I wished to have some definite news to give you. I have spoken to his Holiness and to everyone who had any influence in the matter, and that often and very warmly. At last it has been arranged that you are to have a pension of 3,000 ducats from the see of Breslau. As to obtaining the Provostship for you, the Pope at first gave me great hopes, but the influence of others, whose requests it was not easy to refuse, won the day. I know how easily contented you are, but still I may say boldly that the loss of considerable wealth and dignity is not something to be greatly deplored, as we know well that their possession involves greater danger of losing eternal life. Good-bye. Continue to love me as you do, and in your prayers commend the salvation of my soul to God.

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[1] *Epistolae familiares*, xx, pp. 49–51.

ROME, 24 *January* 1601.[1]

Bellarmine's next step was to write to the Bishop of Breslau:

Right Reverend and Illustrious Lord, Bonaventure Han, once Bishop-elect of Breslau, for the sake of peace and in the spirit of obedience waived his rights, as your Lordship well knows, and was thus brought to such straits as to lack the very necessaries of life. No tie bound me to him save that of Christian charity, but that charity moves my heart and afflicts me as if I were a sharer in his misery. . . . Therefore I beg and beseech your Lordship to deign to succour this unfortunate man, to have pity on him from your heart, and to fulfil the wishes of the Sovereign Pontiff. I shall count this among the greatest favours ever done me, and should there ever be occasion I will repay you gratefully when I learn that Bonaventure's consolation has been owing to the kindness of your Lordship's heart. Good-bye, and remember me in your holy prayers.[2]

At this same period the Archbishop of Mayence received a letter from the Cardinal begging him too to come to the aid of people in distress:

I hear every day that there are plenty of courageous non-Catholics in Germany who would willingly return to the bosom of Holy Mother Church if they could only hope to find friends who would help them in their temporal needs. Our Holy Father, Pope Clement, spends not a little money on this good work, as I have myself witnessed, but he cannot single-handed succour all who apply to him daily. I have no doubt but that your Lordship and the other Catholic Princes of Germany are most anxious to see heretics, and especially distinguished heretics, return to the Church. Nevertheless the ardent desire I have to help Germany by every means in my power urges and almost compels me to seize the opportunity provided by this letter, of commending to your kindness the temporal needs of those who, wearied with the road of perdition, are hastening to enter their native land. Your friendship is very dear to me, and be assured that if ever you need my assistance in any way at Rome it is always at your disposal.[3]

Nearly all of these letters contain references to some business or other which Bellarmine was transacting for his many correspondents. Nicholas Radziwil, Duke of Olica, who was a great soldier and traveller, had availed himself largely of the Cardinal's services, and in gratitude posted to Rome a present of a very valuable fur. We may conclude with an extract from the acknowledgment which he received :

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[1] *Epistolae familiares*, xii, pp. 30–32.

[2] *L.c.*, xvi, pp. 42–43.

[3] *L.c.*, xiii, pp. 32–35.

> Illustrious Prince, You say that I am overwhelming you with favours, but the truth of the matter is that it is you who are overwhelming me. Now though I see in these gifts the tokens of your affection for me, and thank you sincerely for them, yet I must tell you that I have made a resolution to keep clear of such things, and till now have always refused or returned the presents of Princes. If I have not kept my resolution in your case, it is because the costly fur would have to be sent such a long way. I beg you most earnestly, as you love me, never again to send me anything of the kind, unless you wish me to part with it in order to give the price to the poor, as I am thinking of doing with what you have already sent.[1]

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[1] *Epistolae familiares*, XIV, 26 Sept. 1601, pp. 35-37.

APPENDICES

I

THE AUTOBIOGRAPHY OF BLESSED ROBERT BELLARMINE

'Mary said, "Behold from henceforth all generations shall call me blessed"; Saint Paul said, "I am not a whit behind the very chiefest of the Apostles"; and the Meekest and Humblest of Men said, "I and My Father are One." . . . And so you will find that a very humble person can say things that nobody else but a very conceited person could say. Sometimes little humble persons will talk about themselves in a way no one else could who was not frightfully conceited. It is just because they have ceased to be personal.'

Father Maturin.

[i [1]]

N. natus est anno Domini 1542, die 4 octobris. Parentes habuit pios, sed matrem praecipue, quae dicebatur Cinthia, soror Marcelli II Pontificis. Haec novit Societatem per P. Paschasium Broet, unum ex primis decem, qui forte occasione balneorum et aegritudinis suae causa venerat in transitum politianum. Hunc patrem illa mirifice colebat et laudabat, inde amavit semper Societatem et cupivisset omnes suos filios qui erant quinque, ingredi Societatem. Addicta erat eleemosynis, orationi et contemplationi, jejuniis et corporis castigationi. Inde contracto morbo hydropisis obiit pie et sancte anno Domini 1575, anno aetatis 49, vel circa eum annum. Haec educavit filios ad pietatem, et primos tres, quorum tertius erat N., jubebat simul incedere et cum aliis pueris non commisceri, et singulis diebus ad sacram aedem, propinquam domui paternae, accedere, ibique orare ante venerabile Sacramentum. Eosdem mature assuefecit sacrae confessioni, et missae audiendae, et orationi, et aliis devotionibus.

[ii]

N. adhuc puerulus, annorum, opinor, quinque vel sex, concionari solebat, et in inversum scabellum, indutus linea veste, impositus, concionabatur de passione Domini. Ingenium habuit non subtile et elevatum, sed accommodatum ad omnia, ut aequaliter se haberet ad omnes disciplinas capiendas. In pueritia coepit amare poeticam, et magnam noctis partem aliquando consumebat in legendo Virgilio, quem ita sibi familiarem habuit, ut cum carmina exametra scriberet, nullum in eis verbum poneret non Virgilianum. Primum carmen scripsit de virginitate, et capitales litterae reddebant, *Virginitas*. Scripsit eglogam adolescens annorum 16, de obitu Cardinalis de Nobilibus, quae publice recitata est. Scripsit eodem tempore multa carmina latine et italice, et praecipue libros, quos non absolvit, de impedimentis, quae sibi adferebantur, ne ingrederetur Societatem, quos libros virgiliano stilo compositos non solum non absolvit, sed etiam cremavit ; erubuit enim de rebus suis scribere.

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[1] Bellarmine's original manuscript has no title or divisions of any kind. The section numbers are inserted merely to facilitate reference.

[iii]

Scripsit multa carmina Romae, Florentiae, in Montevicio, Parisiis, et denique Ferrariae, cum praeesset recitandae tragicomediae coram Regina Hispaniae, et forte aegrotaret, qui bene longum prologum recitaturus erat, composuit ipse statim prologum breviorem qui mandari facile posset memoriae, versibus jambicis. Ex tanto numero carminum nihil superest, nisi carmen saphicum compositum Florentiae de Spiritu Sancto, cujus initium est : *Spiritus celsi dominator axis*, quod a nescio quo typis mandatum fuit sine nomine auctoris inter selecta carmina virorum illustrium ; et hymnus brevissimus de S^ta^ Maria Magdalena qui positus est in Breviario. Qui hymnus compositus fuit Tusculi, et a Clemente VIII antepositus hymno, quem de re eadem scripsit Cardinalis Antonianus, et uterque nostrum quasi ex tempore scripsit, et joco magis, quam ut in Breviario poni deberent.

[iv]

Ac ut redeam ad tempus ante ingressum Societatis, adolescens annorum quindecim, ut mihi videtur, concionem, sive exhortationem habuit N. feria quinta in coena Domini in Confraternitate primaria civitatis, quam Prior confraternitatis habere solebat. Sed materiam subministrarunt Patres Societatis, ipse autem sibi memoriam, et verba, et actionem de suo apposuit. Sed propter eam concionem, saepe compellebatur a Priore verba facere in eadem confraternitate, brevi spatio temporis ad se parandum concesso. Eodem tempore facile didicit canere, et ludere variis instrumentis musicis ; et etiam retia pro venatione ita statim resarcire, ut nunquam viderentur fuisse scissa.

[v]

Anno 16, cum esset iturus Patavium ad studia graviora ; et jam facultatem a Cosmo Duce Florentiae accepisset dandi opera studiis extra Pisas, decrevit dimittere mundum, et Societati nomen dare. Id autem ita contigit ; cogitabat serio quodam die, quo modo posset ascendere ad veram quietem animi, et cum diu discurrisset de dignitatibus, ad quas aspirare posset, coepit serio cogitare brevitatem rerum temporalium, etiam maximarum, et inde horrore concepto talium rerum, decrevit eam religionem quaerere, in qua periculum nullum esset, ne ad dignitates traheretur ; denique sciens nullam religionem esse ad hanc rem tutiorem, quam Societatem, conclusit, hanc omnino sibi esse eligendam. Contulit hoc suum propositum cum P. Alphonso Sgariglia, suo tunc praeceptore, a quo sciebat, se valde diligi, et secreto, atque ut amicus amicum fidelem rogavit, ut sine fraude diceret, quo modo sibi esset in Societate ? an esset contentus vocatione ? an aliquid lateret mali, vel periculi, quod palam non appareret ? Timebat enim valde, ne post ingressum, poeniteret facti. Bonus ille Pater dixit, sibi esse optime, et contentissimum vivere, et interim venit ad eum nuncius de vocatione Ricciardi Cervini, consobrini sui, ad Societatem, quae vocatio videtur in idem omnino tempus concurrisse. Itaque hinc valde confirmatus, et literis invicem datis, et acceptis, petierunt a R^{do} Patre Laynez, qui tunc erat Vicarius Generalis, ut in Societatem admitterentur. Sed quia idem Pater volebat, id fieri cum bona gratia parentum, evolutus est annus, et parentes eorum impetrarunt a Reverendissimo Patre Laynez, tunc Generali, ut filii eorum adhuc unum annum manerent apud se, ut spiritus probaretur. Concessit Pater Generalis, et dixit, hunc futurum annum probationis duorum consobrinorum.

[vi]

Itaque anno partim 1559, partim 1560, manserunt partim quisque domi suae, partim simul in pago, qui dicitur Vivus, sine ullo impedimento parentum. Quo tempore dabant operam frequentiae sacramentorum, et studiis humanitatis. Quotidie enim post mensam fiebat Academia, et D^{nus} Alexander Ricciardi pater docebat aliquid ex Georgicis Virgilii ; ipse autem Ricciardus explicabat Poeticam Aristotelis graecam, frater ejus, Herennius, qui postea obiit Prothonotarius, et Referendarius utriusque signaturae, orationem Demosthenis pro corona, et N. explicabat orationem pro Milone. Et praeterea in Ecclesia explicabant doctrinam christianam, et hortabantur rusticos, sed non adeo frequenter. Anno evoluto dimissi a parentibus venerunt Romam, et admissi sunt ad Societatem in vigilia S^{ti} Matthaei anno 1560. Post decem dies primae probationis, quibus in cubiculo ut hospites manserunt, admissi sunt ad convictum communem, et septem diebus inservierunt coquinae, septem aliis refectorio; et sic expleto novitiatu missi sunt ad Collegium, et in festo Circumcisionis renovarunt vota, quae fecerant sponte sua primo die ingressus sui, cum caeteris collegialibus.

[vii]

In collegio Romano mansit N. tribus annis dans operam Logicae, et Philosophiae sub P. Petro Parra, et quamvis toto triennio aeger fuerit (primo anno laboravit lethargo gravissimo, eodem et sequenti laboravit continuo dolore capitis, tertio judicatus est phtisicus, vel ecthicus) tamen defendit primus conclusiones menstruas, et in fine cursus defendit totam philosophiam, et cum essent creandi magistri decem aut duodecim condiscipuli, ipse solus pro omnibus explicavit quaestionem de anima, et defendit sine praeside, argumentantibus magistris, uno vel pluribus, non recte memini, et pridie ejus diei missus est ad vineam cum aliquot sociis, ut distraheretur a studio, et commentatione, ne laederetur valetudo ejus infirma.

[viii]

Anno 1563 missus est Florentiam, ut doceret humanitatem. Ibi per aeris mutationem et curam Medici valde boni coepit melius valere. Docuit adolescentes in scholis, ut potuit, sed admiscens philosophicas quaestiones, ut compararet sibi auctoritatem; et in aestate docuit etiam sphaeram cum tractatu de stellis fixis. Habuit in aede primaria duas orationes latinas, et scripsit carmina in magnis festis, quae affigebat januis templi. Evoluta hieme coepit concionari in dominicis, et festis post Vesperas, ita jubente superiore, cum esset annorum 22, imberbis et sine ullis ordinibus, imo sine prima tonsura. In prima concione pia quaedam mulier semper mansit flexis genibus orans, cumque ab ea quaesitum esset, cur hoc fecisset, respondit, se, cum vidisset in suggestu adolescentem imberbem, timuisse, ne continuo animo deficeret cum ignominia Societatis. Sed N. majori spiritu et audacia tunc verba faciebat, quam postea cum esset senex ; certus enim sibi videbatur esse de memoria. Domi etiam coepit, superiore jubente, exhortationes habere ad fratres.

[ix]

Cum N. esset Florentiae, in autumno peregrinatus est cum P. Marco usque Camaldulum, montem Averniae, et Vallem umbrosam, et in itinere concionabatur per pagos, et oppida, et P. Marcus audiebat confessiones. In monte Camaldulensi excepti sunt humanissime a Majore (sic enim vocant Generalem) et tribus diebus eos retinuit. Tertia die pene ex improviso jussit, ut haberet N. exhortationem ad Patres loci illius ; fecit invitus, et coactus, sed venerandi illi senes attentissime audiverunt, et postea manus N. osculari volebant, quam vis adolescentis, sed ille non patiebatur id sibi fieri. Sed Florentiae non mansit, nisi annum unum, et mensem. Inde missus est ad Montem vicium, sive regalem ; comitem habuit unum ex fratribus usque ad mare, paulo ultra Lucam. Postea solus navigavit Genuam, inde Savonam, inde terrestri itinere pervenit ad Montem Vicium. In quo itinere multa pertulit pericula corporis, et animae, ut etiam in quodam hospitio diceret hospita, eum esse maritum filiae suae, qui diu abfuerat ; in alio diceret quidam sibi marsupium ab N. noctu sublatum. Sed Deus adfuit innocenti, qui firmiter statuit, si unquam sibi contingeret regimen alicujus Collegii Societatis, nunquam se missurum solos Patres, aut fratres, praesertim juvenes, etiamsi sumptus maximi faciendi essent.

[x]

In Collegio Montis Vicii invenit expositum catalogum lectionum illius anni, et sibi assignatum Demosthenem graecum, et Marcum Tullium, et alia quaedam ; et quoniam in graecis ipse vix aliquid noverat praeter alphabetum, dixit auditoribus, se velle illos a fundamentis instruere, ac primum eos docere grammaticam, deinde Demosthenem. Itaque maximo suo labore quotidie discebat quod alios doceret ; tantum tamen laborando perfecit, ut brevi Isocratem explicare posset, et deinde alios libros. Aestate docebat Somnium Scipionis, explicans multas quaestiones philosophicas, vel astrologicas, et concurrebant ad audiendum multi etiam ex Doctoribus Universitatis, qui tunc ibi erant. In festo Pentecostes invitus, et pene coactus a superioribus concionatus est in aede primaria tribus diebus continuis, et, quamvis omnino immerito, scriptum est a superiore ad Patres Romanos, nunquam sic locutus est homo, sicut hic homo. Perrexit postea concionari in Dominicis, toto fere triennio, quo ibi mansit, praesertim in Adventu, et festis natalitiis.

[xi]

Accidit autem illi, ut forte legeret conciones Cornelii Bituntini Episcopi, et ad ejus imitationem inciperet conciones scribere ad verbum, et recitare non sine magno labore; sed cum quodam die Natalis Domini post vesperas habuisset concionem valde elaboratam, et in quam memoriae commendandam aliquot dies consumpserat, significatum est a Canonicis templi, sequenti die habendam concionem summo mane. Itaque N. pene desperabat, se concionari posse, cum ne unam quidem horam haberet ad concionem memoriae commendandam. Sed placuit Deo, ut nunquam tam fructuose, et tam libere, et ex corde concionatus sit. Canonici enim dixerunt et: Alias tu concionabaris, hodie angelus de coelo concionatus est. Ex illo tempore decrevit omnino ornamenta verborum dimittere, et sola puncta latine scribere, quod et fecit, praeterquam in concionibus latinis.

[xii]

In collegio illo Montis Regalis N. omnia pene officia exercebat; nam docebat in scholis, legebat ad mensam, concionabatur in templo, habebat exhortationes ad fratres, comitabatur euntes sacerdotes ad sua negotia, janitorem juvabat, cum ille pranderet, excitabat etiam aliquando matutino tempore dormientes, sed cum Pater Adornus Provincialis audivisset illum concionantem, dixit, non esse bonum, ut N. tamdiu differret studia theologica, et jussit illum inde proficisci Patavium, ut audito curso theologico deinceps solis concionibus vacaret. Antequam ex Monte Vicio, sive Regali discederet, accidit illi aliquid jucundum. Fuit comes P. Rectoris ad visitandos Dominicanos. Prior Dominicanorum invitavit Rectorem ad bibendum, et cum ille renueret, dixit Prior: Bebera bene questo fratino vostro compagno, loquens de N. quem non noverat. Die sequenti venit Prior ille ad collegium, et invenit ad portam fungentem munere janitoris ipsum N. rogavitque ut vocaretur concionator. Respondit N. concionatorem non posse venire, sed se relaturum illi fideliter quae Paternitas sua mandaret. Non, inquit Prior, possum tibi dicere quae volo, sed duc me ad concionatorem, vel voca illum ad me. Jam dixi, inquit N., concionator non veniet, et cum ille instaret, coactus est N. dicere, ego sum quem quaeris, et non possum venire, quia hic sum. Tunc Prior memor pridianae irrisionis erubuit, et humiliter satis petiit veniam, et rogavit, ut in Natali Domini pro concione publicaret bullam pontificiam continentem indulgentias pro eleemosyna facienda in subsidium capituli generalis futuri Patrum Praedicatorum, quod N. promisit se facturum, et fecit.

[xiii]

Anno 1567, N. venit Patavium ad studium theologicum inchoandum. Tunc nostri fratres duos habebant praeceptores, unum domi, qui erat P. Carolus Pharao Siculus, qui docebat primam partem S. Thomae, alterum in scholis publicis, Fr. Ambrosium Barbaciarium Dominicanum, qui docebat tractatum de legibus ex p^{a} 2^{ae} S^{t} Thomae. Sed quia nostri fratres et N. cum eis adverterunt, f. Ambrosium nihil dicere, nisi quod est apud Sotum in p^{o} libro de justitia et jure, cito dimiserunt eum; et cum P. Carolus doceret praedestinationem ex praevisis operibus: N. in suis scriptis ponebat sententiam S^{ti} Augustini de gratuita praedestinatione. Sed vix abierunt duo menses studii theologici, et N. coactus est concionari in templo collegii, primum ante prandium, deinde post prandium. In bachanalibus profectus est Venetias, et ibi habuit concionem feria quinta bachanaliorum in conventu multorum nobilium, ubi attentissime auditus est disserens contra choreas, et alias insanias illius temporis; et cum absolvisset, multi nobilium senatorum manus illi osculari volebant.

[xiv]

In mense maio ductus est N. Genuam a P. Provinciali occasione congregationis provincialis, ut defenderet conclusiones, et concionaretur. Itaque biduo sustinuit conclusiones in ecclesia Cathedrali, ex Rhetorica Aristotelis, ex Logica, ex Physica, ex Metaphysica, ex Mathematica et ex omnibus partibus S^{ti} Thomae. Et cum inter disputandum cum suo praesidente, P. Carolo Pharaone, non conveniret, jussit P. Provincialis, ut P. Carolus taceret, et sineret N. per se respondere. Habuit etiam concionem die dominica post vesperas in maxima frequentia auditorum; sed totam fere desumpserat ex oratione S^{ti} Basilii in illud, *Attende tibi*; sciebat enim in illo auditorio non multos esse qui furtum ex Basilio agnoscere possent.

[xv]

Evoluto anno jussus a Patre Generali proficisci Lovanium ad latinas conciones habendas, et ibi absolvendum cursum theologicum; sed quia Patavii inchoaverat pro suggestu explicationem psalmi, *Qui habitat*, et avide audiebatur, noluerunt Patres Patavini eum dimittere, et P. Generali responderunt, periculum esse, ne N. hiberno tempore frigus germanicum ferre non posset, et hoc esse etiam judicium medici. Sed N. scripsit P. Generali se promptum esse continuo proficisci quocumque obedientia juberet; sed non ivisse, quia Paternitas sua non jusserat sibi, ut iret, sed superiori immediato, ut mitteret. Expectavit P. Generalis sex menses, quo tempore audivit N. P. Joannem Ricasolum docentem aliquas quaestiones tertiae partis S^{ti} Thomae, et in festis diebus lectiones suas continuavit in templo super Psalmum, *Qui habitat*, et exhortationes habebat ad fratres feria sexta.

[xvi]

Apparente vero anno 1569 scripsit P. Generalis ad N., ut proficisceretur Mediolanum, et ibi adjungeret se Patri Jacobo Flandro, et iret Lovanium. Et quoniam iter dicebatur valde periculosum propter milites Ducis Bipontini, qui transibant ex Germania in Galliam per viam, quam nos facturi eramus, contulit se N. ad Sanctissimum Sacramentum, ibique toto corde obtulit Deo vitam suam, et quidquid in illo itinere sibi accidere disposuisset. Inde plenus bona fiducia ivit sine socio Mediolanum ubi adjunctus P. Jacobo, et Dno Gulielmo Alano, qui postea fuit Cardinalis, cum aliis duobus Anglis, et uno Hiberno profectus est Lovanium. Et cum ingrederetur collegium dixit, ego mittor a P. Generali, ut hic duobus annis maneam, sed ego septem annis manebo. Et ita factum est. Quo spiritu ductus hoc dixit, nescit: nisi quod ita venit illi in mentem.

[xvii]

Latine concionari coepit in die S^{ti} Jacobi Apostoli; et cum durum videretur, quod nullos adhuc haberet ordines ecclesiasticos, et stolam gerere non posset, ut ibi omnes concionatores solebant, scriptum est a Patribus Lovaniensibus P.

Generali super hac re. Ille differebat ordinationem, ne cogeretur N. emittere professionem trium votorum juxta decretum Pii V ; sed tamen rescripsit ut N. emitteret professionem trium votorum, et sic ordinaretur, emissurus postea professionem 4or votorum. Et quoniam nec Lovanii nec in vicinis locis erat Episcopus, coactus est proficisci Leodium, ubi accepit in 4or temporibus post cineres, primam tonsuram, 4or minores, et subdiaconatum ; deinde profectus est Gandavium, et a Cornelio Jansenio suscepit diaconatum in sabbato *Sitientes*, et presbyteratum in sabbato sancto, et in octava Paschae Lovanii cecinit solemniter primam Missam cum diacono, et subdiacono, anno Domni 1570.

[xviii]

Eodem anno ad initium octobris rogatus a Patribus, ut doceret theologiam scholasticam, assensus est, et quamvis non audivisset nisi partem aliquam primae partis, et tertiae partis, tamen jactans in Domino cogitatum, docuit totam primam partem annis duobus, et partem primae secundae uno anno, et secundam secundae duobus annis, et initium tertiae partis alio anno. Itaque concionatus est sex primis annis, et septimo cessavit a concionibus jam fractis viribus ; et docuit sex ultimis annis. Proinde primo anno solum concionatus est, ultimo anno solum docuit quinque intermediis simul concionabatur, et docebat. Neque ab exhortationibus domi habendis, neque a confessionibus audiendis liber erat. Scholam theologicam Lovanii primus N. aperuit, nam usque ad eam diem non permisit Universitas, ut nostri publice docerent. Et quoniam Michael Bajus, insignis alioqui doctor, multas opiniones sequebatur, quae videbantur declinare ad novos errores Lutheranorum, quaeque damnatae fuerunt a Pio V Pontifice anno 1570, animadvertens N. non deesse multos, quibus hae opiniones placerent, coepit eas refutare non sub nomine Doctoris Michaelis, sed sub nomine veterum, aut novorum haereticorum.

[xix]

Eo tempore cogitans N. linguam hebraicam valde utilem esse ad intelligentiam sacrae Scripturae, applicavit animum ad eam linguam discendam, et cum didicisset alphabetum ab aliquo perito illius linguae, et aliqua rudimenta grammaticae, confecit ipse sibi grammaticam hebraicam, faciliori methodo, quam Rabbini soleant, et brevi tempore linguam hebraicam, quantum theologo satis esse videtur ; et instituit Academiam, in qua cum aliquot aliis sociis exerceret studium linguae hebraicae et graecae. Et, ut ostenderet grammaticam suam esse caeteris faciliorem, promisit uni ex discipulis suis in schola theologica, qui linguae hebraicae omnino imperitus erat, se effecturum, ut spatio dierum octo, si sibi operam dare vellet, disceret ex lingua hebraica, quantum satis esset, ut cum auxilio dictionarii, per se libros hebraicos intelligere posset; quod ipsum omnino praestitit, ut ostenderet non esse falsum existimandum, quod S^tus^ Hieronymus de Blesilla scripsit, eam didicisse linguam hebraicam, paucis non mensibus, sed diebus.

[xx]

Anno 1572 in octava Apostolorum, N. emisit professionem 4^or^ votorum. Quo anno defecerunt a Rege Philippo multae civitates, et cum Princeps Aurangius veniret cum magno exercitu contra Lovanium, omnes fere religiosi recesserunt, quia civitas non facile defendi poterat, et haeretici Calvinistae, quorum plenus erat exercitus Principis, in religiosos praecipue saeviebant. Quia vero multo citius hostes adfuerant, quam sperabatur, Rector Collegii jussit omnes mutare vestes, et deponere comas, ut corona clericalis non appareret, et divisit eis modicum pecuniae, quod erat in collegio, et dimisit binos, et binos, ut salvarentur ab imminenti periculo, quomodo possent. Tunc N. cum uno socio abiit pedes versus Artesiam, multis diebus, magno labore, et periculo, donec venit Duacum, ubi fugiens bellum, invenit pestem in urbe illa graviter grassantem. Sed ex omnibus periculis liberavit eos Deus.

[xxi]

Accidit aliquando, ut nocte imminente N. ita fatigatus esset, ut nullo modo progredi posset. Itaque necesse erat, ut in via, et via valde periculosa consisteret; sed ecce currus velociter currens plenus hominibus, qui et ipsi fugiebant a facie hostium, propinquavit, et cum cognovisset auriga non posse N. ulterius progredi, stetit, et libentissime accepit eum in currum, socio validiore pedibus praecurrente, donec venirent ad suburbia civitatis. Auriga ille vir bonus erat, et bene catholicus, et dicebat, se olim solitum audire quotidie unam missam, sed nunc in odium haereticorum audire se velle quotidie duas, et juvare quantum posset sacerdotes, quos illi persequuntur; et ea de causa dicebat, se libenter in currum recepisse N., quia audiverat a socio ejus, illum esse sacerdotem, quamvis habitum laicalem gestaret.

[xxii]

Ad finem autumni Dux Albae magno coacto exercitu fugavit Principem Aurangium, et recuperavit urbes amissas in Hannonia, et Brabantia, et tunc N. rediit Lovanium ad pristinum officium concionandi, et docendi. Quanta esset frequentia auditorum, potest inde colligi, quod cum finiretur concio, et per diversas portas auditores exirent, ita implebantur duae, vel tres plateae, ut cives mirarentur, unde tot homines prodirent ; dicebantur enim esse aliquot millia. Cum N. iret ad habendam concionem die quadam (aberat enim collegium ab ecclesia S^ti^ Michaelis, ubi fiebat concio, satis procul) adjunctus est ei vir quidam gravis, qui non agnoscens N. esse concionatorem, quia erat parvae staturae, et in suggestu videbatur procerus ob scabellum suppedaneum, unde exierat vox per oppidum, venisse ex Italia procerum juvenem, ut conciones latinas haberet ; ille, inquam, coepit multa rogare ab N., an nosset concionatorem, unde esset, ubi studuisset, et simul laudare supra veritatem ; et cum N. ita responderet, ut tamen se non manifestaret, dixit ille, Tu nimis lente progrederis, ego cupio, bona tua venia, celeriter accurrere ut, locum inveniam. Respondit N., fac ut libet, nam mihi locus deesse non potest.

[xxiii]

De fructu concionum, hoc solum possum dicere, in concione quadam habita de morte in die Animarum, magnum motum ad poenitentiam extitisse, ut etiam in concione quadam habita in dominica infra octavam corporis Dni, multos fuisse confirmatos in fide veritatis corporis Dni in Eucharistia, vel etiam conversos ab errore, ut a fide dignis accepi. Multa alia dicebantur, ob quae Patres Lovaniensis Collegii non acquieverunt, ut N. discederet, cum peteretur instanter a Cardinali Borromeo, qui nunc S^tus^ Carolus dicitur, et a Patre Generali promissus ei fuisset ; et similiter cum peteretur a Parisiensibus. Sed anno 1576, cum videretur ita prostratae valetudinis, ut judicio medicorum non posset diu supervivere, scripserunt P. Generali, se non posse diutius sine gravi scrupulo conscientiae impedire, quo minus aerem mutaret. Tunc Generalis scripsit, ut statim Romam eum mitterent, quod et fecerunt.

[xxiv]

Ubi N. descenderet ex Augusta praetoria, et aerem italicum haurire inciperet, mirum est, quam in corpore suo mutationem senserit. Videbantur vires redire, et ipse ex doloribus variis, quibus affligebatur, melius habere. Itaque Roman pervenit adeo confirmatus, ut post unum vel alterum mensen, coeperit, jubentibus superioribus, controversias in gymnasio Romano explicare, in quo munere perseveravit annis undecim; cum interim exhortationibus in collegio habendis, et confessionibus fratrum audiendis vacaverit. Anno, ni fallor, 1584, coepit N. scribere, et in lucem edere libros; ac primum edita est ejus institutio hebraica, deinde editi sunt libri tres de translatione imperii Romani contra Illyricum; postea editus est primus tomus controversiarum, qui postea divisus est in duo ob nimiam magnitudinem; deinde editus est tomus secundus, qui postea vocatus est tertius. Eodem tempore editi sunt libri aliquot, qui inter opuscula habentur.

[xxv]

Anno 1589, cum mitteretur C$^{\text{nalis}}$ Caetanus legatus in Gallias ob motus gravissimos hujus regni, missus est cum eo N. a Sixto V Pontifice. In Galliis coeperat esse celebre nomen N. ob libros controversiarum editos; ideo multi eum videre cupiebant, et ipsum frequenter adibant. In itinere Illustrissimus Legatus quaerebat ab N., quamdiu putaret supervicturum Pontificem; respondebat ille, hoc ipso anno moriturum, quod saepe illi confirmavit Parisiis, cum Cardinalis longiorem vitam ejus futuram omnino affirmaret. Cum esset Cardinalis Legatus cum toto suo comitatu apud Divionem Burgundiae, et recedere inde cogitaret, ut Parisios proficisceretur, exiit fama, esse in quodam bivio Dominum Tavines cum mille equitibus in insidiis, ut Cardinalem caperet, ex comitatu ejus aliquos necaret, aliquos caperet; sed exiit simul alia, hoc totum esse confictum, ut impediretur iter Cardinalis. Igitur Card$^{\text{lis}}$ cum non posset agnoscere veritatem per media humana, celebrato sacro, cum omnes essent parati ad iter, secreto conjecit in calicem duas parvulas schedulas, in quarum una scriptum erat, *eundum*, in altera, *non eundum*, et commendans Deo totum negotium, eduxit sorte illam, quae habebat, *non eundum*; et paulo post innotuit, verum esse, quod dicebatur de insidiis.

[xxvi]

Parisiis mansimus a 20 die januarii usque ad initium septembris; quo tempore nihil fere egimus, sed multa passi sumus. Nam cum die 12 martii conflixissent Dux Maiennae cum Rege

Navarrae, et Rex victoriam obtinuisset, timor et tremor cecidit super nos. Sed Rex nolens perdere, et spoliari tam magnam civitatem, maluit per obsidionem illam capere, quam vi irrumpere. Itaque obsidione eam cinxit; et nos omnes destituti victualibus miserrime egimus: nam brodium coctum in olla cum carne canum satis care vendebatur. Legatus Regis Hispaniae donavit nobis pro magno munere partem quamdam equi sui, quem occiderat ad cibum. Nihil ibi N. egit, nisi quod nomine Card^lis^ legati scripsit epistolam latinam ad Episcopos Galliae, dehortans eos a schismate; quoniam ferebatur, velle eos cogere Synodum nationalem et in ea creare Patriarcham independentem ab Apostolica Sede, et hoc impeditum fuit.

[xxvii]

Accidit initio septembris, ut adferrentur ad Cardinalem literae ex Roma, quae mirum est quomodo penetraverint in urbem undique clausam; et cum alii alia dicerent de illis literis, antequam a Cardinali aperirentur, ut fere omnes mala ominarentur, quia Sixtus Papa infensus erat Card^li^ et secretario, et ipsi etiam Bellarmino propter inventam in libris suis propositionem negantem Papam esse dominum directe totius mundi; tunc N. dixit, in his literis continetur mors Sixti Quinti Pontificis. Et cum omnes eum deriderent, quia nihil de Sixti aegritudine auditum erat, tamen verum fuit, quod N. affirmavit, et mirati sunt universi.

[xxviii]

Romam N. rediens aegrotavit gravissime Moldis, siquidem in ea civitate grassabatur dissenteria quaedam lethalis, ex qua qui corripiebantur, vix mortem evadebant; hac dissenteria laborare coepit N. prima nocte, et adjuncta erat febris gravissima, et nihil gustare poterat, nec requiescere. Cardinalis substitit una integra die, deinde consilium habuit cum suis, quid fieret de N.; tandem inspiravit Deus Cardinali consilium bonum, ut non relinqueret N. in eo loco, sed secum duceret, quocumque modo posset. Itaque parari fecit lecticam suam, et in ea collocari N. et placuit Deo ut exiens N. de civitate illa, mox melius valere inciperet, et spatio octo dierum iter faciendo jacens, vel sedens in lectica plane convalesceret. In itinere transivit per Basileam, sed non est agnitus; ubi vero auditum est, ibi fuisse N., ferunt multos aegre valde tulisse, quod eum videre non potuissent; an ei nocere, vel eum honorare voluerint, incertum est. Romam pervenit die undecima Novembris.

[xxix]

Anno 1591, cum Gregorius XIV cogitaret, quid agendum esset de Bibliis a Sixto V editis, in quibus erant permulta perperam mutata, non deerant viri graves, qui censerent, ea biblia esse publice prohibenda. Sed N. coram Pontifice demonstravit, non esse biblia illa prohibenda, sed esse ita corrigenda, ut salvo honore Sixti Pontificis, biblia illa emendata prodirent. Quod fieret, si quam celerrime tollerentur quae male mutata erant, et biblia recuderentur sub nomine ejusdem Sixti, et addita praefatione, qua significaretur, in prima editione Sixti prae festinatione irrepsisse aliqua errata vel typographorum vel aliorum. Et sic N. reddidit Sixto Pontifici bona pro malis. Sixtus enim propter illam propositionem de dominio Papae directo in totum orbem, posuit controversias ejus in Indice librorum prohibitorum donec corrigerentur; sed ipso mortuo, congregatio Sacrorum rituum continuo jussit deleri ex libro Indicis nomen ejus. Placuit consilium N. Gregorio Pontifici, et jussit ut congregatio fieret ad recognoscenda celeriter biblia sixtina, et revocanda ad ordinaria biblia, praesertim Lovaniensia. Id factum est Zagarolae in domo Card^{lis} Marci Antonii Columnae, praesentibus Cardinali ipso Columnensi, et Alano Cardinali Anglo, nec non Magistro Sacri Palatii, ipso N. et aliis tribus, vel quatuor; et post obitum Gregorii, et Innocentii, Clemens VIII edidit biblia recognita sub nomine Sixti cum praefatione, quam idem N. composuit.

[xxx]

In autumno anni 1591 N. secessit Tusculum, ut scriberet tertium tomum controversiarum, quem paucis mensibus absolvit, et editum Clementi VIII dicavit. Anno 1592, factus est N. Rector collegii Romani, et ut aliis exemplum religiosae simplicitatis praeberet, abstulit ex cubiculo Rectoris varia scrinia pretiosa, et jussit poni in sacristia ad conservandas mappulas, et alias res sacras; abstulit item imagines depictas, *quadri* nominatas, et alia omnia, quae non sunt necessaria, et solum habere voluit ea quae habent alii fratres. Non finivit suum triennium, sed missus est Neapolim, ut ibi esset Provincialis: in quo officio conatus est verbo, et exemplo alios docere, et provinciam bis visitavit.

[xxxi]

Sed triennium non complevit; nam defuncto Cardinali Toleto vocatus est Romam a Papa Clemente VIII anno 1597, mense januario; et quidem Papa eum in palatium vocare volebat, ut ibi degeret: sed ipse per Card. Aldobrandinum obtinuit, ut in poenitentiaria potius, quam in palatio degeret; et simul factus est consultor sancti officii. Eo tempore coepit Pontifex ad eum mittere supplicationes dispensationum matrimonialium, et alia nonnulla. Ipse tamen rarissime, et nonnisi ex maxima necessitate in palatium ibat. Circa Clementem Papam contigit aliquod mirabile. Nam p° anno pontificatus, cum multi suspicarentur, eum cito moriturum, ut fecerant tres ejus praedecessores, dixit Sylvio Antoniano N.: Clemens VIII vivet annos duodecim, et menses duodecim; et hoc saepe repetivit: et anno ultimo saepe dixit familiaribus suis illo anno Papam moriturum. Ipse tamen neque erat Astrologus, neque Propheta, sed casu ita loquebatur. Tunc etiam rogante Card^{li} Taurusio scripsit catechismum brevem, et alium grandiorem, qui paulo post sunt typis mandati, et multis in locis frequentati.

[xxxii]

Anno 1598, Papa profectus est Ferrariam, et secum duxit N. qui non solum fungebatur officio consultoris S. Officii, sed etiam examinatoris futurorum Episcoporum, et tractabat cum Papa negotia Societatis, quae a patre Generali sibi demandabantur; et quamvis N. degeret in collegio Societatis, tamen Papa singulis septimanis dabat collegio propter ipsum viginti quinque scuta.

[xxxiii]

Anno 1599, in feria quarta quatuor temporum quadragesimae creavit N. Cardinalem, ita de improviso, ut nunquam praescire potuerit id futurum. Quia tamen multi suspicabantur id futurum, P. Generalis ante duos menses quaesivit a Pontifice per Magistrum Camerae, an placeret sibi ut N. fieret Rector Poenitentiariae, et annuente Pontifice factus est Rector Poenitentiariae. Sed Papa hoc permisit, ut negotium tegeret: sicut etiam cum ante medium annum Ferrariae diceret quidam familiaris Pontifici, N. esse dignum Cardinalatu, respondit Papa: Est quidem dignus, sed est jesuita, subindicans non se illum facturum. Cum ergo postea renunciatus esset in consistorio Cardinalis cum aliis duodecim, misit continuo Card^{lis} Aldobrandinus Marchionem Sannesium ad N. qui ei significaret, eum factum esse Cardinalem, et juberet ex nomine Sanctissimi, ut domo non exiret ullo modo. Tunc N. convocavit patres omnes Poenitentiariae ad se et petiit consilium, quid sibi agendum esset. P. Jo. Baptista Costa, qui erat senior omnium, dixit, non esse locum consultationi, quia cum esset jam Card$^{\text{lis}}$ factus, et declaratus in consistorio, nullam esse spem, ut Papa acceptaret ullas excusationes, praesertim cum expresse mandaverit, ut ex domo non discederet; idem alii dixerunt. Tunc N. misit P. Ministrum ad Card. Aldobrandini, qui ei diceret, cupere N. adire Pontificem, ut ei rationes suas exponeret, cur non posset acceptare eam dignitatem: sed non audere domo egredi propter prohibitionem ab ipso nomine Pontificis factam. Respondit Card$^{\text{lis}}$ Aldobrandinus, se non posse concedere, ut N. adeat Pontificem, nisi quando vocabitur, quia Pontifex non vult illum audire, sed jussit, ut ex obedientia acciperet hanc dignitatem. Vocatus postea ad pileum, sive birettum rubrum accipiendum, et volens incipere excusationes suas, Pontifex statim interrupit, et dixit: In virtute s$^{\text{tae}}$ obedientiae, et sub poena mortalis peccati, jubeo, ut accipias dignitatem Cardinalatus.

[xxxiv]

In Cardinalatu statuit apud se, primo non mutare modum vivendi, quoad parcitatem victus, orationem, meditationem, missam quotidianam, et alia statuta, vel consuetudinem Societatis; 2° non cumulare pecunias, nec ditare cognatos, sed ecclesiis, vel pauperibus dare quicquid superesset ex redditibus; 3° non petere a Pontifice majores redditus, nec acceptare munera Principum, quae omnia servavit.

[xxxv]

Anno 1602, vacante Ecclesia Capuana Papa dedit illam ipsi N. et cum ipsemet Papa eum consecrasset in dominica secunda post pascha, quando legitur evangelium, *Ego sum Pastor bonus*, et post duos dies dedisset illi Pallium archiepiscopale, die sequenti discessit ex palatio, et clausit se in collegio Romano per 4$^{\text{or}}$ dies, ut fugeret visitationes; et cum feria sexta habuisset orationem ad fratres, mox discessit ad residentiam in ecclesia sua. Haec tam festinata discessio ex Urbe admirationem attulit multis, et ipsi Pontifici, quia ut plurimum curiales vix evelli possunt a curia, et alius Card$^{\text{lis}}$ qui cum ipso N. consecratus fuit in Archiepiscopum Barensem, distulit egressum suum usque ad finem octobris.

[xxxvi]

Pervenit N. ad Ecclesiam Capuanam die p^{o} Maji, et solemni ingressu peracto, et missa solemniter decantata, paulo post, id est, in die Ascensionis ascendit pulpitum, et fecit initium concionandi. Ipso primo anno reduxit Ecclesiam Cathedralem, et palatium episcopale ad meliorem formam, expensis in ea re aliquot millibus aureorum ; descripsit numerum familiarum pauperum, et singulis mensibus mittebat ad eas certum numerum pecuniarum ; et assignavit variis locis piis menstruas eleemosynas, praeter eas, quae dabantur singulis diebus ad portam, et praeter extraordinarias eleemosynas. Tribus annis resedit Capuae, et ter visitavit totam dioecesim ; ter celebravit synodos dioecesanas, et semel concilium provinciale, quod ab annis octodecim non fuerat celebratum. Invenit consuetudinem, ut in Cathedrali non haberetur concio, nisi 4^{or} dominicis Adventus, et per Quadragesimam ; ipse autem coepit concionari etiam in festis natalitiis, et per totum annum diebus dominicis fere omnibus ; nec solum in civitate, sed etiam in pagis tempore visitationis. Et quoniam ipse non poterat toto anno esse in pagis et in civitate : quando ipse erat in civitate, mittebat duos patres Societatis, qui circumirent pagos, assignatis illis decem aureis in singulos menses, ne gravarent rusticos ; et quando ipse visitabat pagos, patres illi manebant in civitate concionantes et confessiones audientes.

[xxxvii]

Scripsit, dum esset in pago quodam majore, explicationem symboli lingua italica, quam typis mandavit, ut Parochi, qui concionari nesciunt, legerent post Evangelium, unius articuli explicationem, praecipue, quando congruebat cum festis diebus. Et quoniam usus erat quidam, ut canonici, et parochi in festis natalitiis munera mitterent Archiepiscopo satis magna : interdixit omnino hanc consuetudinem, tum ne pauperes canonici, et parochi gravarentur, tum ut divites darent majore cum suo merito pauperibus, quae daturi erant Archiepiscopo non egenti ; saepe enim cogitabat, et aliis inculcabat illud Isaiae : *Beatus qui excutit manus ab omni munere.* Intererat officio divino cum canonicis (nam Capuae Archiepiscopus est etiam canonicus, et distributiones recipit satis opimas) omni die festo, non solum ad Missam et Vesperas, sed etiam ad Matutinum, et laudes : diebus autem feriatis intererat saltem officio matutinali, tum ut canonicos in officio contineret, et assuefaceret psalmodiae gravi et morosae, tum ut lucraretur distributiones pro pauperibus: integre enim eas pauperibus largiebatur; dicebat enim, hanc solam esse eleemosynam proprie suam, quippe quam labore proprio lucrabatur; reliqua enim ecclesiae esse, non sua.

[xxxviii]

Praedixit ab initio, se tribus annis solum illi Ecclesiae praefuturum; et cum magna diligentia conquisivisset nomina praedecessorum, a S^{to} Prisco, S^{ti} Petri Apostoli discipulo, usque ad sua tempora, et in catalogo posuisset omnes praedecessores, et de suo immediato dixisset: *Caesar Costa sedit annis triginta*, subjunxit: *N. sedit annis tribus*; et sic omnino factum est. Nam post triennium mortuus est Clemens VIII Papa, et successor ejus Paulus V noluit permittere, ut N. rediret Capuam; unde coactus est renunciare Ecclesiam. Porro N. legebat vitas sanctorum Episcoporum, quas ex Surio in unum collegerat; et ex hac lectione plurimum juvari se sentiebat. Amabatur a populo, et ipse amabat populum; ministri quoque regii nihil molestiae illi unquam intulerunt, sed venerabantur eum, quoniam arbitrabantur eum esse Dei servum.

[xxxix]

In conclavi Leonis XI, et rursum in conclavi Pauli V, ut plurimum vel in cella sua manebat, vel solus in loco solitario deambulabat rosarium, aut libellum aliquem legens, et privatim in orationibus suis dicebat Domino: *Mitte quem missurus es*, et: *A Papatu libera me Domine.* In 2° conclavi parum abfuit, quin fieret Papa; et cum aliquis vir gravissimus promitteret suam operam, ipse hortatus est, ut desisteret, neque ei gratias egit et affirmavit, se ne paleam quidem ex terra sublaturum, si per hoc Papa fieri potuisset; neque eos, qui impediverunt, odio habuit, aut inde turbatus est: dicebat enim definitionem Papatus esse, laborem periculosissimum, sive periculum laboriosissimum. Tempore Pauli V, expendit in fabrica sui tituli scuta. . . . Item collegio Societatis politiano donavit reditum quinquaginta scutorum in perpetuum; collegio Capuano resignare voluit Abbatiam Capuanam reditus plus quam mille scutorum, sed Papa noluit; auctor tamen fuit, ut ei daretur Ecclesia, domus, et hortus ejus Abbatiae. Eodem tempore edidit commentaria in psalmos; libellos duos, vel tres italicos contra Venetorum Doctores; item librum apologeticum contra regem Angliae; librum contra Gulielmum Barclaium, librum contra Rogerum Widdrincthonem, et librum de scriptoribus ecclesiasticis cum chronologia.

[xl]

In multis congregationibus Cardinalium adscriptus fuit, videlicet S^ti^ officii, indicis librorum prohibitorum, sacrorum rituum, examinis Episcoporum, indulgentiarum, de propaganda fide, Germanica, et Hungarica. Protector fuit Coelestinorum, S^{tae} Marthae et collegii Germanici ; et Vice protector in absentia Card^{lis} Aldobrandini charitatis S^{ti} Hieronymi, et Convertitarum. Vivit adhuc annum agens septuagesimum primum, et quotannis, mense potissimum septembri, colligit se, ut vacet orationi, et silentio, dimissis aliis occupationibus ; ut pulverem contractum ex negotiis variis, si quo modo possit, detergat, et ad reddendam Deo rationem villicationis se paret. Orate pro eo.

[xli]

Haec scripsit N. rogatus ab amico, et fratre an. 1613, mense junio. De virtutibus suis nihil dixit, quia nescit, an ullam vere habeat ; de vitiis tacuit, quia non sunt digna quae scribantur, et utinam de libro Dei deleta inveniantur in die judicii. Amen.

ADDITIONES

[xlii]

N. ad profectum studiorum multum sibi profuisse sensit necessitatem docendi quae non didicerat, et donum facilitatis, quod a Deo habuit, ad omnia capienda, et explicanda ; nam coactus est docere literas graecas, et praecepta Rhetoricae, et scholasticam theologiam, et in ipsa prima adolescentia concionari in templis, et exhortationes habere ad fratres. Qua necessitate cogente per se didicit literas graecas, et hebraicas, et legit fere omnes Patres, et historias, et multos scholasticos Doctores, et concilia, vel eorum summam, ut etiam totum fere corpus canonicum, neque multum laboravit in intelligendis, quae legebat, cum praesertim in variis collegiis habitaverit, ubi non habebat quos consuleret.

[xliii]

Neapolim missus, ut recognosceret scripta P. Salmeronis, mansit in ea civitate menses circiter quinque, videlicet a mense majo usque ad octobrem; quo tempore perlegit immensa volumina praedicti Patris; et quotidie adferebat ad Patrem errata, quae invenerat, vel in citandis auctoribus, vel in falsis historiis, vel in opinionibus novis, vel in scripturis non recte explicatis, vel in dogmatibus philosophicis, aut theologicis a veritate abhorrentibus, et quamvis Pater cum primum illa audiret, irasceretur, et defendere conaretur, tamen sequenti die pacato animo omnia emendabat; et, ni fallor, multum illi profuit ea recognitio.

[xliv]

In controversia belgica P. Leonardi cum Lovaniensibus, non parum laboravit, ut Cardinalem Madrutium conciliaret Doctoribus Societatis. Scripsit ad illum breve opusculum, in quo demonstravit, doctrinam Societatis convenire cum doctrina veterum Lovaniensium, Tapperi, Tiletani, et aliorum, et recentes Lovanienses non recte explicare doctrinam nostrorum.

[xlv]

Circa librum Molinae de concordia, primo N. admonuit P. Generalem, antequam lis ulla exoriretur, esse in Molina multas propositiones male sonantes, et scriptas illi exhibuit. Eas P. Generalis misit in Hispaniam, et inde secuta est nova editio P. Molinae, in qua propositiones illas mollire conatur, et dicit, se disputative, non assertive locutum. Deinde exorta lite jussus a Papa Clemente scribere quid sentiret de censura P P. praedicatorum, scripsit opusculum dilucidum, in quo ostendit, in quo tota controversia consisteret, et opinionem praedicatorum esse periculosiorem, quam opinionem Molinae; quod opusculum Pontifici mire probatum est initio. Scripsit etiam duo alia opuscula respondens ad objectiones, vel criminationes adversariorum, quae Pontifici non displicuerunt; et cum Tusculi esset N. jam Cardinalis, cum ipso Pontifice, et de his rebus fieret sermo, sententiam Societatis Papa vocabat sententiam nostram, id est, suam et Societatis. Sed postea totus mutatus est, et donec N. fuit Romae, noluit publice de ea tractari, ne ipse N. interesset. Sed post ejus discessum, continuo disputari voluit coram Cardinalibus S^{ti} Officii. Ipse tamen N. saepe admonuit Pontificem, ut caveret fraudes, et ut non putaret se studio proprio, cum theologus non esset, posse ad intelligentiam rei obscurissimae pervenire; et aperte illi praedixit, a Sanctitate sua quaestionem illam non esse definiendam ; et cum ille replicaret, se definiturum, respondit N. : ‘Sanctitas vestra non eam definiet,’ et hoc idem praedixit Cardinali de Monte, qui postea ipsi N. in memoriam revocavit.

[xlvi]

A Cardinali Baronio dissensit in quadam congregatione super reformatione Breviarii, de passione S^{ti} Andreae, an esset vere scripta a presbyteris Achaiae : negabat Baronius, sed cum audisset sententiam N. et rationes ejus, publice dixit, se amisisse causam, et placere sibi sententiam N. magis quam suam.

[xlvii]

Pro beatificatione B. Ignatii multa egit. P^{us} fuit, qui memoriale congregationis generalis, in qua ipse interfuerat, attulit ad Cardinalem Gesualdum, praefectum congregationis sacrorum rituum ; et sic introducta est causa canonizationis. Deinde cum habuisset primam exhortationem de laudibus B. Ignatii in ecclesia domus professae coram Patribus, et fratribus, praesente Card^{li} Baronio : finita exhortatione Card^{lis} Baronius petiit imaginem B. Ignatii, et eam conscensa scala, appendit super sepulchrum ejusdem B. Patris ; et inde coepit honorari, et frequentari sepulchrum. Postea, cum tempus opportunum illi videretur petendi beatificationem, admonuit P. Generalem, et P. Generalis magna sollicitudine curavit, ut P. Procurator celerrime expediret quae necessaria erant, et brevissimo tempore successit negotium ; quod nisi tunc peractum fuisset, ipso praesertim instante apud omnes Cardinales congregationis, et suo voto prolixe declamante, Deus novit, quando beatificatio impetrata fuisset.

[xlviii]

Pro B. Aloysio, ipse cum Card^{li} Asculano et Pamphilio, retulit Pontifici Paulo V, dignum esse, qui Beati nomine insigniretur. Et antea cum cadaver esset prope sepulchrum, auctor fuit, ut peteretur facultas a P. Generali, ponendi corpus illud in arca lignea seorsim ab aliis corporibus, ut posset dignosci, si aliquando canonizandus esset. Postea subjecit se examini pro ejus canonizatione ; et cum aliis Cardinalibus congregationis rituum expedivit literas remissoriales. Et cum tractaretur de beatificatione, ipse primus prolixe disseruit de ejus innocentia, et vitae austeritate, et miraculis ; et conclusit, omnes sanctos vel propter innocentiam, vel propter poenitentiam sanctos haberi, B. Aloysium propter utrumque titulum posse beatificari ad similitudinem S^{ti} Jo. Baptistae ; et ejus votum omnes Cardinales sequuti sunt, et factum est decretum, quod tamen Summus Pontifex non confirmavit ; quae sit causa, ignoratur.

II

DE RATIONE SERVANDA IN BIBLIIS CORRIGENDIS

[*Vide supra*, p. 284]

Quia periculum est, ne sine ullo fructu diu multumque laboremus in emendatione vulgatae editionis sacrorum bibliorum, nisi prius in certis principiis, hoc est, in certa aliqua ratione procedendi conveniamus : operae precium me facturum existimavi, si primum proponerem quaestiones, quae inter nos versantur, et ex quarum determinatione regulae formandae essent ; deinde paucis exponerem incommoda quae sequentur, nisi quaestiones illae prius absolvantur quam emendationis negocium longius procedat.

Sunt igitur de ratione emendandae vulgatae editionis quaestiones sex.

Prima quaestio. Cum nulla est in codicibus latinis vulgatis lectionum varietas, utrum corrigendus sit latinus codex, si dissentiat a codicibus hebraeo, graeco, et chaldaeo.

Secunda. Cum nulla est lectionis varietas in textibus vulgatis, utrum corrigendus sit latinus codex, si dissentiat a solo hebraeo et chaldaeo, et conveniat cum graeco.

Neque est addenda quaestio, an corrigendus sit latinus codex, si dissentiat a solo graeco, vel chaldaeo, et conveniat cum hebraeo ; nam id non esse faciendum extra controversiam est.

Tertia. Cum est varia lectio in latinis codicibus vulgatis, utrum corrigendus sit codex impressus ad manuscripta, si dissentiant ab hebraeo, chaldaeo, et graeco.

Quarta. Cum est varietas lectionis, utrum sit corrigendus impressus codex ad manuscripta, si dissentiat ab hebraeo et chaldaeo, et conveniat cum graeco.

Neque est addenda quaestio, an corrigendus sit latinus codex ad manuscripta, si dissentiat a solo graeco ; id enim non esse faciendum, inter omnes convenit, cum vulgata latina editio ex hebraico fonte, non ex graeco profluxerit.

Quinta quaestio, utrum in tertia et quarta quaestione sit habenda ratio manuscripti codicis, quando unus tantum est, licet antiquissimus.

Sexta quaestio, utrum in emendatione vulgatae editionis ad manuscripta vel ad fontes, praetermittendae sint minutae varietates, quae sensum scriptoris sacri neque mutant, neque obscuriorem aut duriorem faciunt.

Istae sunt igitur quaestiones, de quarum explicatione non convenit inter nos, quaeque discutiendae et terminandae essent; et nisi id fiat, haec sequentur incommoda.

Primo, non poterit reddi ratio, cur hoc modo potius quam alio sacrum textum ediderimus, nisi quia nobis ita placuit. Est autem ratio valde infirma judicium paucorum hominum in re tanti momenti, nisi legem a superiore praescriptam habeant.

Secundo, nos quorum judicio res tota commissa videtur, non solum pauci sumus, sed etiam inter nos minime consentimus, et saepe mutationes in bibliis vel fiunt vel omittuntur, aliquibus repugnantibus. Itaque hoc judicium non modo paucorum hominum erit, verum etiam paucorum inter se dissidentium, et quorum nullus dicere poterit emendationem a nobis factam a se in omnibus probari.

Tertio, emendatio non erit constans et uniformis, sed quod uno in loco mutabitur, id ipsum in alio non mutabitur, ut jam experiri coepimus.

Quarto, res quae brevi tempore expediri potuisset, in longum protrahetur non sine scandalo et periculo. Ratio autem tarditatis erit, quia in singulis fere mutationibus inter nos contendimus, cum unusquisque suum judicium tueri velit. Sunt enim qui nihil fere mutari vellent ex bibliis latinis impressis; sunt alii qui mutari vellent omnia quae non consentiunt cum antiquis manuscriptis; nec desunt qui media via incedant.

Quinto, jam nunc divinare possumus fore ut hic noster labor a plurimis improbetur, cum multa relinquantur a nobis in bibliis quae plurimi viri docti sublata esse vellent; quaedam etiam tollantur quae nonnullis relinquenda viderentur; nec ullam certam rationem nostri consilii reddere valeamus. Neque satisfiet viris doctis, praesertim iis qui longe absunt ab Urbe, si dicamus hanc emendationem prodire ab Apostolica sede, cujus, est infallibile judicium; nam non ignorabunt Summum Pontificem non praefuisse congregationi eorum qui biblia correxerunt, neque eorum sententias audivisse, sed negocium totum aliis demandasse, quibus assistentiam Spiritus Sancti delegare non potuit.

Sexto, cum opus a nobis magno labore post unum vel alterum annum perfectum erit, non facile edetur in lucem. Non enim Summus Pontifex, cujus nomine emitti debet, certior reddi poterit, rectene an secus in emendatione bibliorum processerimus, cum ignoret quid sequuti simus, neque nos ei significare possimus quam rationem in bibliis corrigendis tenuerimus, quippe qui nihil certi habuimus. Itaque oportebit ut noster labor aliis recognoscendus demandetur, qui a nobis dissentient in multis, ut nos in multis dissentimus ab iis qui sub Ill^{mo} Card. Caraffa primum, deinde sub sanctissimo Pontifice Sixto V idem opus peregerunt. Quod si etiam ad judicium universitatum nostra emendatio referenda erit, quod nonnulli faciendum esse censent, res erit infinita. Oportebit enim ab universitatibus de integro tota biblia conferri cum fontibus et manuscriptis, cum non possimus ad eos mittere regulas quas in emendandis bibliis sequuti sumus, ut illis solis inspectis de tota emendatione simul judicium ferant.

Quae cum ita sint, ut emendatio bibliorum talis sit, quae et a Summo Pontifice tuto probari et ab universa Ecclesia laudari possit, quaestiones a nobis propositae discutiendae et ex eis regulae formandae essent judicio multorum hominum doctissimorum ex variis universitatibus, qui Romae non desunt. Est enim hoc tempore in Urbe sindicus facultatis Theologicae Parisiensis, vir prudens et doctus ; est alius Doctor Theologus Lovaniensis ; adsunt Doctores Hispani ex universitatibus Salmanticensi et Complutensi tum in coenobio Praedicatorum, tum in collegio Jesuitarum, tum etiam extra religiones ; nec desunt Doctores Itali permulti. Consulendi etiam essent Ill^{mi} Cardinales et caeteri Praelati qui de hac re bene judicare possunt, hoc est, qui scientia Scripturarum et prudentia valent. Et tandem regulae conscriptae ex consensu majoris partis horum Doctorum tuto a Summo Pontifice approbari possent ; neque esset indignum Majestate ejus, si ipso praesente et praesidente congregatio generalis semel celebraretur. Regulis autem ita praescriptis labor castigandae vulgatae editionis paucis hominibus trium linguarum cognitione praestantibus committendus esset, qui brevi, tuto et magno cum fructu opus peragerent. Neque esset necessarium ad judicium universitatum emendationem bibliorum referre ; et si forte in posterum aliquid corrigendum in bibliis irreperet, in promptu esset ex praescriptis regulis castigatio.

III

TRACTATUS DE OBEDIENTIA, QUAE CAECA NOMINATUR

[*Vide supra*, pp. 134–135.]

Scripturus breviter de obedientia caeca quam P. Ignatius Societati a se institutae plurimum commendavit, exponam primum quid per caecam obedientiam idem P. Ignatius intellexerit : deinde, juvante Deo, eamdem obedientiam ex divinis litteris, et testimoniis Patrum, et coelestibus miraculis confirmari ostendam. Diluam ad extremum objectiones quasdam quae adversus eam fieri posse videntur.

CAPUT PRIMUM

Quam obedientiam P. Ignatius Societati a se institutae, commendavit.

Igitur P. Ignatius Societatis nostrae auctor et parens, cum in epistola quadam ad Lusitanos de obedientia, tum in constitutionibus quas Societati reliquit, passim ad obedientiam perfectam quam ipse cum Joanne Climaco caecam nominavit, suos filios adhortatur.

Nihil vero aliud caecae obedientiae nomine intelligi voluit, nisi obedientiam puram, perfectam, ac simplicem sine discussione ejus quod imperatur vel causae cur imperatur, eo solo contenta quod imperatur. Et quamvis haec omnia, etiamsi nihil diceretur aliud, accipienda essent cum exceptione, nisi videlicet quod imperatur peccatum esse constet, eam tamen exceptionem idem P. Ignatius, tam in constitutionibus, quam in epistola de obedientia luculenter expressit. Sic enim loquitur in Constitutionibus, Part. 6, cap. 1, § 1 : ‘ Exactissime omnes nervos virium nostrarum ad hanc virtutem obedientiae imprimis summo Pontifici, deinde superioribus Societatis exhibendam intendamus ; ita ut in omnibus rebus, ad quas potest cum charitate se obedientia extendere, ad ejus vocem ac si a Christo Domino egrederetur, quandoquidem ipsius loco, ac pro ipsius amore et reverentia obedientiam praestamus, quam promptissimi simus.' Et paulo post: 'Sancta obedientia, tum in executione, tum in voluntate, tum in intellectu sit in nobis semper omni ex parte perfecta, cum magna celeritate, spirituali gaudio et perseverantia, quidquid nobis injunctum fuerit obeundo, omnia justa nobis esse persuadendo, omnem sententiam ac judicium contrarium caeca quadam obedientia abnegando, et id quidem in omnibus quae a superiore disponuntur, ubi definiri non possit, quemadmodum dictum est, aliquod peccati genus intercedere.' Et in 3ª Part., cap. 1, § 23: 'Conentur interius resignationem et veram abnegationem propriae voluntatis et judicii habere, voluntatem et judicium suum cum eo quod superior vult et sentit, in omnibus ubi peccatum non cerneretur, omnino conformantes.' Et in epistola de obedientia, cap. 18: 'Est, inquit, haec ratio subjiciendi proprii judicii, ac sine ulla quaestione suscipiendi quodcumque superior jusserit, non solum sanctis viris usitata, sed etiam perfectae obedientiae studiosis imitanda, omnibus in rebus quae cum peccato manifeste conjunctae non sunt.' Porro in his omnibus locis excipitur manifestum peccatum, non autem dubium, quia, re dubia existente, in superioris potius quam in suo judicio acquiescere subditum oportere, non solum vera humilitas, sed etiam aperta ratio apertissime docet. Et hoc idem S. Bernardus, in tractatu *de praecepto et dispensatione*, ex professo tradit cum ait: 'Quidquid vice Dei, praecipit homo, quod non sit certum displicere Deo, haud secus accipiendum est, quam si praecipiat Deus.'

Addidit autem idem P. Ignatius non repugnare perfectae obedientiae, si quis id quod sibi forte occurrit contra superioris mandatum, eidem superiori cum debita reverentia et humilitate proponat, modo paratus sit voluntatem et judicium suum cum eo conformare, quod judicat et vult is quem loco Christi habet. Sic enim in epistola de obedientia, cap 19, loquitur: 'Nec tamen idcirco vetamini, si quid forte vobis occurrat a superioris sententia diversum, idque vobis, consulto per preces Domino, exponendum videatur, quominus id facere possitis.'

Denique hanc obedientiam non repugnare subordinationi praelatorum ostendit, cap. 20, cum ait: 'Atque haec quae de obedientia dicta sunt, aeque privatis erga proximos superiores, atque Rectoribus praepositisque localibus erga Provinciales, Provincialibus erga Generalem, Generali denique erga illum quem Deus ipsi praefecit, nempe suum in terris Vicarium, observanda sunt.'

CAPUT SECUNDUM

De obedientia caeca testimonia Scripturae.

Hanc autem obedientiam ex divinis literis S. Basilius aliique Patres deducunt, siquidem Scripturae passim docent, obediendum esse praelatis ac praepositis non secus atque ipsi Domino, modo non constet contrarium esse Domino quod jubent praelati. Lucae 10: *Qui vos audit, me audit.* Ephes. 6: *Obedite dominis carnalibus cum timore et tremore, in simplicitate cordis vestri, sicut Christo*, etc. Coloss. 3: *Quodcumque facitis, ex animo operamini, sicut Domino, et non hominibus.* Domino autem perfectam simplicemque, atque adeo caecam obedientiam deberi ab hominibus, ut non quaerant cur aliquid eis praecipiatur, contenti quod praecipiatur, nec ullus negare audebit, et Scripturarum exempla id manifeste docent. Reprehenditur enim Eva, Genes. 3, quae Satanam dicentem, *cur praecepit vobis Deus?* non continuo est aversata, ut notant S. Joannes Chrysostomus, homil. 16 in Genesim, et S. Bernardus in serm. de S. Andrea. Abraham e contrario mirifice laudatur, Genesis 21 et 22, quod jussus egredi de terra sua, et migrare in alienam regionem, et rursus unicum filium propriis manibus immolare, sine ulla tergiversatione aut mandati discussione, promptum se obtulerit ad obsequium.

Sed Patres ex his locis caecam obedientiam deducentes, audiamus.

S. Basilius, posteaquam in *Constitutionibus Monasticis*, cap. 20 et sequentibus, docuerat obedientiam perfectissimam, qualis est, ut exemplo ejus utamur, instrumenti fabrilis respectu fabri qui eo utitur, et qualem Abrahamus aliique sancti viri Deo ipsi exhibuerunt, ita loquitur cap. 23: 'Neque vero existimet quisquam, me causa firmandae erga Antistites obedientiae, elatiora quaedam exempla proferre, eique quod Deo debetur officio, arroganter obedientiam hominibus praestandam audere conferre; neque enim ad hanc similitudinem inducendam mea sponte, sed divinis literis inductus accessi. Animadverte enim, quid in Evangeliis Dominus dicat, cum de obedientia servis suis exhibenda, legem sanciret: *Qui vos*, inquit, *recipit, me recipit.* Et item in alio loco: *Qui vos audit, me audit, et qui vos spernit, me spernit.* Quod Apostolis dixit, intelligendus est in commune legem sanxisse in posteros qui aliorum futuri erant moderatores ; id ex multis, iisdemque certissimis divinarum literarum testimoniis manifestissimisque argumentis probari potest. Ex quo quidem patet nos, quando diximus tenendae a nobis erga Antistites nostros obedientiae, adhibitam a sanctis viris erga Deum obedientiam, exemplar nobis oportere proponere, divinis oraculis convenienter esse locutos.' Haec ille.

S. Benedictus in *Regula*, c. 5 : 'Obedientia, inquit, quae majoribus exhibetur, Deo exhibetur ; ipse enim dicit : *Qui vos audit, me audit.*' Sanctus Bernardus in tractatu *de praecepto et dispensatione :* 'Quod si, inquit, tantopere cavenda sunt scandala parvulorum, quanto amplius praelatorum, quos sibi Deus aequare quodam modo in utraque parte dignatus, sibimet imputat illorum et reverentiam et contemptum, specialiter contestans eis : *Qui vos audit, me audit, et qui vos spernit, me spernit ?* Quamobrem quidquid vice Dei praecipit homo, quod non sit tamen certum displicere Deo, haud secus accipiendum est, quam si praecipiat Deus' Sanctus Bonaventura in *speculo disciplinae*, part. 1, cap. 4, hanc ipsam sancti Bernardi sententiam, tacito nomine auctoris, suam fecit, dum eam totidem verbis in libro suo posuit. Sanctus Vincentius in tractatu *de vita spirituali*, cap. de obedientia : 'Omnes majorum ordinationes ad unguem teneat quantum potest, semper cogitans verbum Christi : *Qui vos audit, me audit.*'

CAPUT TERTIUM

De obedientia caeca sententiae Patrum.

Hanc eamdem perfectam simplicemque obedientiam, quam caecam appellare placuit, summo consensu sancti Patres docuerunt, atque ii praesertim qui variis temporibus aut ordinum religiosorum duces extiterunt aut in eisdem ordinibus insigniter claruerunt, ut nulla fuerit unquam in Ecclesia Dei professio observantiae regularis, quae hanc obedientiam non coluerit.

Sanctus Basilius, qui monachorum in toto Oriente parens, optimas leges monachis dedit, in libro *monasticarum constitutionum*, cap. 20 : 'Monachi, inquit, libentissime et diligentissime obtemperent suo praeposito neque ab eo, eorum quae sibi imperantur, rationem reposcant.' Et cap. 23 : 'Quemadmodum, inquit, pastori suo oves obtemperant et viam quamcumque ille vult, ingrediuntur, sic qui ex Deo, cultores pietatis sunt, moderatoribus suis obsequi debent, nihil omnino ipsorum jussa curiosius perscrutantes, quando libera sunt a peccato.' Et infra, obedientem cum instrumento fabrorum comparat, quod non sibi eligit opus quod faciat, neque fabro ulla ratione resistit, sed absque ulla discussione aut resistentia, simpliciter se moveri ab opifice sinit, ad quod ille voluerit. Quo loco, sanctus Basilius et verbis et similitudinibus obedientiam illam describit, quam nos caecam vocamus. Quare P. noster Ignatius in Constitutionibus, part. 6, cap. 1, § 1, caecam obedientiam declaravit, Basilium imitatus, per similitudinem baculi quo senex inter ambulandum innititur, quem quidem sine ulla ejus resistentia, vel accipit, vel deponit, vel deprimit, vel attollit, etc.

S. Hieronymus qui praeter maximam in omni genere doctrinae sapientiam et eruditionem, perfectus monachus et pater monachorum fuit, in epistola ad Rusticum de institutione monachi ita scribit : 'Praepositum monasterii timeas ut dominum, diligas ut parentem, credas salutare quicquid ille praecepit, nec de majorum sententia judices, cujus officii est obedire et implere quae jussa sunt.' Haec ille, qui breviter quidem, sed tamen plene obedientiam illam commendavit, quam ideo caecam vocamus quod non judicet de sententia majorum, sed simpliciter credat salutare quicquid monasterii praepositus jusserit.

S. Augustinus, lumen Ecclesiae et ex praecipuis religionum fundatoribus unus, insignem de hac re sententiam habet, quam ex ejus operibus his verbis citat S. Bonaventura in opusculo *octo collationum*, cap. 3 : 'Ut obedientia religiosi Deo sit acceptabilis, debet esse prompta sine dilatione, devota sine dedignatione, voluntaria sine contradictione, simplex sine discussione, perseverans sine cessatione, ordinata sine deviatione, jucunda sine turbatione, strenua sine pusillanimitate, et universalis sine exceptione. Qualiter nos audimus nostros superiores, taliter nostras exaudiet Deus orationes.' Haec Augustinus. In quo testimonio verba illa, *simplex sine discussione*, eam obedientiam manifeste docent, de qua nos agimus.

Joannes Cassianus, lib. 4 *de institutis renunciantium*, cap. 10°, referens instituta monachorum Aegypti, quorum auctores fuerunt sanctissimi illi Patres, S. Antonius, S. Macharius et alii, inter alia sic loquitur : 'Sic universa complere, quaecumque fuerint a praeposito suo praecepta, tanquam si a Deo sint coelitus edita, sine ulla discussione festinant, ut nonnunquam etiam impossibilia sibimet imperata ea fide ac devotione suscipiant, ut tota virtute ac sine ulla cordis haesitatione, perficere ea aut consummare nitantur, et ne impossibilitatem quidem praecepti, pro senioris sui reverentia, metiantur.' Et cap. 41, referens monita sancti Pynuphii, praeclarissimi Abbatis, ad novitium quemdam, se praesente, data : ' Verum, inquit, et quartum hoc prae omnibus excole, ut stultum te, secundum Apostoli sententiam, facias in hoc mundo, ut sis sapiens ; nihil scilicet discernens, nihil dijudicans ex his quae tibi fuerint imperata, sed cum omni simplicitate ac fide obedientiam semper exhibeas, illud tantummodo sanctum, illud utile, illud sapiens esse judicans, quicquid tibi vel lex Dei, vel senioris examen indixerit.' Haec ille.

Sanctus Benedictus, patriarcha primarius monachorum totius Occidentis, regulam scripsit monasticam, teste sancto Gregorio, lib. 2 *dialog.*, cap. 36, discretione praecipuam, sermone luculentam. In ea igitur regula, cap. 5, ita scribit de veris obedientibus : ' Mox ut imperatum aliquid a majore fuerit, ac si divinitus imperetur, moram pati nesciunt in faciendo.' Et paulo post : ' Non suo arbitrio viventes, vel desideriis vel voluntatibus obedientes, sed ambulantes alieno judicio et imperio, in coenobiis degentes, etc.' Quae loca exponentes Joannes cardinalis de Turrecremata et Smaragdus Abbas docent, non esse religiosi examinare aut discutare mandata superioris. Item in eadem regula, cap. LXVIII, idem S. Benedictus jubet, si fratri a praeposito impossibilia injungantur, ut confidens de adjutorio Dei obediat ex charitate. Atqui haec est caeca illa obedientia, quae ita non discernit superioris mandatum, ut etiam ad impossibilia tota animi devotione et alacritate feratur.

S. Gregorius, Papa sanctissimus, Doctor egregius, monastica professione et magisterio insignis, lib. 4, cap. 4, expositionis in I^{m} lib. Regum : ' Vera, inquit, obedientia nec praepositorum intentionem discutit, nec praecepta discernit, quia qui omne vitae suae judicium majori subdidit, in hoc solo gaudet, si quod sibi praecipitur, operatur ; nescit enim judicare, quisquis perfecte didicerit obedire, quia hoc totum bonum putat, si praeceptis obediat.'

Joannes Climacus, et ipse monachus perfectus, et monachorum magisterio clarus, in illo suo aureo tractatu qui inscribitur *climax*, gradu 4^{o} : ' Dominus, inquit, illuminat caecos obedientium oculos ad contuendas magistri virtutes, idemque eos excaecat, ne defectus videant. Contra vero bonis omnibus infestus daemon facere curatur.' Haec ille, qui pulchre explicat quemadmodum vera obedientia caeca sit, et oculata : caeca enim est ad contuendos superioris defectus et humanam infirmitatem, oculata ad ejusdem virtutes et auctoritatem considerandam, et ideo quicquid imperatur, sine discussione justum et sanctum credit. Idem in eodem loco : ‘ Cum tibi, inquit, cogitatio suggesserit ut praelatum aut dijudices aut damnes, ab ea non secus quam a fornicatione desili ; neque prorsus huic serpenti requiem praestes, non locum, non initium, non ingressum. Loquere ad hujusmodi draconem atque eum his verbis incesse : O maligne seductor, non ego ducem meum judicandum suscepi, sed ille me ; non ego illius, sed ille mei dux est.’

Caesarius Arelatensis, qui in florentissimo monasterio Lirinensi ante annos 900 vixit, in homiliis ad monachos, hom. 8, sic loquitur : ‘ Quicquid tibi a senioribus fuerit imperatum, accipe tanquam de coelo, sicut de ore Dei prolatum : nihil reprehendas, nihil discutias, in nullo penitus murmurare praesumas. Totum justum, totum sanctum et utile judica quicquid tibi a praelato videris imperari.’

S. Joannes Damascenus, ut in ejus vita scribit Joannes Patriarcha Hierosolymitanus, ‘ non obluctabatur in iis quae ipsi imperabantur, in lingua murmur non erat, nec ulla in corde disceptatio.’ Et infra : ‘ Hoc unum in media mente, non secus atque in tabulis penitus exsculptum et incisum habebat, nempe ut in omni negotio et edicto, sine murmuratione, et, velut Paulus praecipit, sine disceptatione, quod imperatum esset faceret.’

S. Bernardus doctrina, sanctitate, miraculorum gloria et monasticae perfectionis scientia nulli secundus, in tractatu *de praecepto et dispensatione :* ‘ Sive Deus, inquit, sive homo, mandatum quodcumque tradiderit, pari profecto obsequendum est cura, pari reverentia deferendum, ubi tamen contraria Deo non praecipit homo.’ Et infra : ‘ Imperfecti cordis et infirmae prorsus voluntatis indicium est, statuta seniorum studiosius discutere, haesitare ad singula quae injunguntur, exigere de quibusque rationem, et male suspicari de praecepto cujus causa latuerit, nec unquam libenter obedire, nisi cum audire contigerit, quod forte libuerit, aut non aliter licere, seu expedire monstraverit, vel aperta ratio vel indubitata auctoritas.’ Et in serm. seu lib. *de vita solitaria*, ad fratres de Monte Dei : ‘ Perfecta, inquit, obedientia maxime in incipiente est indiscreta, hoc est, non discernit quid vel quare praecipiatur, sed ad hoc tantum nititur ut fideliter et humiliter fiat quod a majore praecipitur.' Quam sententiam confirmat S. Bonaventura in *speculo disciplinae*, part. 2, cap. 3. Quod si nomine indiscretae obedientiae uti licuit sanctis istis Patribus, majori ratione licebit nobis uti nomine obedientiae caecae, cum caecitas naturae vitium sit, indiscretio voluntatis.

Imo hoc etiam nomine usus est S. Bernardus in sermone de conversione D. Pauli, ubi multa praeclara de obedientiae virtute: 'Quam pauci, inquit, inveniuntur in hac perfecta obedientiae forma, ut ne ipsi quidem cor proprium habeant, ut non quod ipsi, sed quod Dominus velit, omni hora requirant, dicentes sine intermissione: *Domine, quid me vis facere?* Et illud Samuelis: *Loquere, Domine, quia audit servus tuus*. Heu! plures habemus evangelici illius caeci, quam novi Apostoli imitatores.' Et paulo post: 'Non est obedientia eorum plena, non in omnibus parati sunt obsequi, non per omnia proposuerunt eum, qui non suam, sed Patris venit facere voluntatem; discernunt et judicant, eligentes in quibus obediant imperanti; imo in quibus praeceptorem suum, ipsorum obedire necesse sit voluntati.' Et paulo post: 'Felix caecitas, qua male quondam illuminati in prevaricatione tandem in conversione oculi salubriter excaecantur.' Et paulo post: 'Haec dico, charissimi, quia, vereor, ne quis forte sit inter vos, qui solo se somnio praesumat illuminatum esse, nec jam aequanimiter patiatur ad manum trahi, sed ductorem sese profiteatur aliorum. Cui enim necdum cura administrationis injuncta est, cui necdum credita dispensatio, cui necdum praeceptum ut videat et provideat his, qui apertos oculos habentes, nihil vident, quid hoc praesumere tentat nisi quia meditatur inania, et quasi somnia vana sectatur?'

S. Franciscus, a Deo doctus, cui purissima mente et flagrantissima charitate inhaeserat, cum quadam vice quaereretur ab eo, quis esset verus obediens judicandus, corporis mortui, ut S. Bonaventura in ejus vita cap. 6 refert, similitudinem pro exemplo proposuit: 'Tolle, inquit, corpus exanime, et ubi placuerit pone; videbis non repugnare motum, non murmurare situm, non reclamare dimissum; quod si statuatur in cathedra, non alta, sed ima respiciet; si collocetur in purpura, pallescet. Hic, ait, verus obediens est qui, cur moveatur, non dijudicat; ubi locetur, non curat; ut transmutetur, non instat; erectus ad officium, solitam tenet humilitatem; plus honoratus, plus reputat se indignum.' Haec ille, cujus doctrinam secutus P. noster Ignatius in 6ª parte Constitutionum, cap. 1, § 1, quemadmodum ex magno Basilio accepit similitudinem instrumenti inanimis ad explicandam obedientiae perfectionem, sic ex sancto Francisco mutuatus est exemplum cadaveris ad eamdem obedientiam exactius depingendam. Nec mirum videri debet, si verus obediens conferatur cum homine caeco, si recte cum homine mortuo vel cum instrumento inanimi comparatur.

S. Thomas Aquinas, Doctor Angelicus, in 1. 2. quaest. 13, art. 5, cum in tertio argumento probavisset ex regula sancti Benedicti, electionem esse posse etiam impossibilium, his verbis respondit : ‘ Ad tertium dicendum, quod hoc ideo dicitur, quia, an aliquid sit possibile, subditus non debet suo judicio definire, sed in unoquoque judicio superioris stare.’ Haec ille, qui adeo caecam obedientiam esse voluit, ut ne impossibilitatem quidem praecepti discerneret.

Sanctus Bonaventura, Doctor seraphicus, et regularis observantiae peritissimus, in *speculo disciplinae*, parte 1ª, particula 1ª, cap. 4 : ‘ Illum, inquit, optimum dixerim obedientiae gradum, cum eo animo opus injunctum recipitur, quo et praecipitur : cum ex voluntate jubentis pendet intentio exequentis. Nunquam de majorum sententia judicent, quorum officii est obedire et implere quae jussa sunt.’ Et in 2ª parte, particula 1ª, cap. 3 : ‘ Obedientiae se totos subjiciant, sit homo interior totus Deo, sit exterior totus praelato subjectus. Quicquid superior eis vel praepositus vel instructor injunxerit, quasi divinitus imperatum, statim ut veri obedientiae filii devote adimpleant ; quicquid statuerint, immobiliter servent, scienterque aliquid transgredi sacrilegium putent ; credant salutare, quicquid ille praeceperit.’

Idem sanctus Bonaventura, 2ª parte opusculi *stimuli divini amoris*, cap. XI, de paucitate bene viventium : ‘ Non enim, inquit, sicut moderni nunc, ipsi tunc librabant hoc melius esse illo, hoc securius, hoc laudabilius, hoc facilius, sicut quidam nunc faciunt causa fugae : sed cuncta quae cernebant esse praelatorum suorum beneplacita voluntati, dummodo non essent contra Deum, quantumcumque ardua et vilia forent, aviditate maxima adimplebant ; tanta enim in eis vigebat charitas et obedientiae promptitudo, ut ad jussa implenda nequaquam timerent discurrere super aquas, nec etiam formidarent ire ad capiendas leenas, cum eis erat injunctum, et breviter, ad multa alia ardua et difficilia, quae non sufficio enarrare, amore et nisu obedientiae se simpliciter alacriter et viriliter, quam citius exponebant. Non enim judicavit infructuosum illud esse qui obediens Abbati, cum labore quasi importabili, voluit per annum lignum aridum adaquare, et ex hoc apparuit obedientiae celsitudo, quia quod mortuum fuerat et aridum, per obedientis meritum fecit fructum. Quid ergo de obedientia gloriamur? Numquid poterimus nos fortasse viri apostolici nominari? Timeo quod nec etiam christiani, sed potius tanquam imitatores Luciferi, merito possimus daemoniaci appellari.'

Sanctus Vincentius, cum ordinis esset sancti Dominici, id sine dubio fecit et docuit, quod in eo clarissimo ordine juxta sanctorum Patrum Augustini et Dominici instituta, laudari cognoverat: is autem ut supra citavimus, obedientiam perfectissimam et plane caecam tradidit.

Sed multo copiosius et apertius de caeca obedientia disseruit Venerabilis Umbertus, quintus magister Generalis Ordinis Praedicatorum, in epistola quam ad suos fratres de tribus votis dedit; quam epistolam si quis conferat cum ea, quam Pater noster Ignatius nobis reliquit, videbit eas in extollenda obedientiae virtute ita concurrere, ut eodem spiritu dictatas esse negare non possit. Inter alia sic scribit, cap. 5: 'Ut autem obedientia vestra omnipotenti Deo sit acceptabilis, studete habere promptam sine dilatione, devotam sine dedignatione, voluntariam sine contradictione, simplicem sine discussione, ordinatam sine deviatione, jucundam sine turbatione, strenuam sine pusillanimitate, universalem sine exceptione, perseverantem sine cessatione.' Et cap. 6: 'Quapropter, dilectissimi, sitis sicut aurum ductile, et quasi virga flexilis, quae recta et curva redditur ad libitum artificis; sitis ut rotae volubiles, quae secundum impetum spiritus movebantur; sitis ut jumentum apud Deum, cujus dorso indifferenter quaelibet imponuntur.' Et cap. 9: 'Tam simplex etiam sit obedientia vestra, fratres, ut injuncta sine discussione facientes indicetis de vestro, nec in minimo, vos habere; nam quisquis intentionem praecipientis judicat, bellum intrinsecus parat. Per hoc enim quod causas mandatorum, quas ignorat, discutit, in labyrinthum erroneum sese ponit.' Haec ille. Nec immerito ad marginem hujus sententiae adscriptum videmus: 'Obedientia caeca'; nam et verbis et similitudinibus satis ostendit auctor caecam obedientiam, id est, quae sine discussione obtemperat, se commendare.

CAPUT QUARTUM

Miracula quibus obedientia caeca a Deo confirmata est.

Addemus nunc etiam miracula, quibus Deus caecae obedientiae perfectionem sibi gratissimam esse testatus est. Scribit Joannes Cassianus, lib. 4 *de institutis renuntiantium*, cap. 23, S. Joannem Abbatem merito obedientiae ad tantam prophetiae gratiam pervenisse, ut imperator Theodosius non ante auderet bella suscipere quam oraculis ejus fuisset animatus ; cujus rei meminit etiam S. Augustinus, lib. *de cura pro mortuis*, cap. 17, ubi alia quoque miracula ejusdem S. Joannis refert. Porro obedientiam tanti viri omnino caecam fuisse Cassianus demonstrat, cap. 24 : ‘ Hic, inquit, B. Joannes ab adolescentia sua usque ad perfectam ac virilem aetatem seniori suo deserviens, donec ille in hujus vitae conversatione duravit, tanta humilitate inhaesit ejus obsequiis, ut ipsi quoque seni stuporem summum obedientia ejus incuteret. Cujus hanc virtutem, utrum de vera fide ac perfecta cordis simplicitate descenderet, an affectata esset, et quodammodo coactitia, atque ad imperantis faciem praeberetur, volens manifestius explorare, quamplura ei etiam superflua minusque necessaria, vel impossibilia frequentius injungebat.’ Haec ille, qui deinde multa profert exempla simplicis obedientiae beati Joannis in rebus superfluis vel impossibilibus.

Severus Sulpitius in 1º *Dialogo de virtutibus Orientalium monachorum*, mirabile refert exemplum simplicis obedientiae, quod ejus verbis referendum putavi : ‘ Quidam, inquit, ad eum Abbatem recipiendus advenerat ; cum prima ei lex obedientiae poneretur, ac perpetem polliceretur ad omnia, vel extrema, patientiam : casu Abbas, storacinam virgam jampridem aridam manu gerebat ; hanc solo fixit atque illi advenae id operis imponit, ut tamdiu virgulae aquam irriguam ministraret donec, quod contra omnem naturam erat, lignum aridum in solo arente revivisceret. Subjectus advena durae legis imperio aquam propriis humeris quotidie convehebat, quae a Nilo flumine per duo fere millia petebatur, jamque emenso anni spacio labor non cessabat operantis et de fructu operis spes esse non poterat ; tamen obedientiae virtus in labore durabat. Sequens quoque annus vanum laborem jam affecti fratris eludit. Tertio demum succedentium temporum labente curriculo, cum neque noctu, neque interdiu aquarius ille cessaret operator, virga floruit. Ego ipsam ex illa virgula arbusculam, quae hodieque intra atrium monasterii est ramis virentibus vidi ; quae quasi in testimonium manens, quantum obedientia meruit, et quantum fides possit, ostendit.’

Joannes Climacus in suo illo tractatu qui *climax* dicitur, gradu 4º scribit Achatium quemdam fuisse juvenem summae obedientiae, eamque omnino perfectam ac caecam exhibuisse usque ad mortem, indiscreto et crudeli cuidam seni, a quo sine ulla causa quotidie contumeliis et plagis afficiebatur; post mortem autem vocanti se de sepulcro alteri cuidam seni ac dicenti: Achati frater, putasne mortuus es? respondisse in haec verba: ‘Et fieri quomodo potest, Pater, ut moriatur homo obedientiae deditus?’

S. Gregorius, lib. 2º *Dialogorum*, cap. VII, scribit Maurum S. Benedicti discipulum ad Abbatis imperium tanto impetu simplicis obedientiae cucurrisse ad Placidum adjuvandum, qui in lacum deciderat, ut per aquam sicco vestigio, quasi per aridam, ad jactum sagittae, iverit atque redierit: quod quidem miraculum post Petrum Apostolum, ut idem S. Gregorius ait, inusitatum, S. Benedictus Mauri obedientiae non dubitavit adscribere. Multa sunt alia quae hoc loco referri possent, sed ad institutum nostrum haec pauca sufficiunt.

CAPUT QUINTUM

Diluuntur Objectiones.

Sed movere potest aliquem id quod diximus, obediendum esse praelato in omnibus, si quis dubitet sitne peccatum an non quod praecipitur? An ut obediat homini, periculo se exponet peccandi in Deum? praesertim cum satis constet praelatum hominem esse errori obnoxium, et falli aut fallere posse.

Ad hanc objectionem respondit olim S. Bernardus in lib. *de praecepto et dispensatione*, et quidem his verbis: ‘Sed homines, inquis, facile falli in Dei voluntate de rebus dubiis percipienda et praecipienda fallere possunt. Sed enim quid hoc refert tua, qui conscius non es? praesertim cum teneas ex Scripturis, quia labia sacerdotis custodiunt scientiam, et legem ex ore ejus requirunt, quia angelus Domini exercituum est. Requirunt dixerim legem: non quam, vel authentica ulla Scriptura tradiderit, vel ratio manifesta probaverit: de hujusmodi quippe nec praeceptor exspectandus, nec prohibitor auscultandus est: sed quod ita latere, aut obscurum esse cognoscitur, ut in dubium venire possit, utrumnam Deus sic, aut aliter forte velit, si non de labiis custodientibus scientiam et ex ore angeli Domini exercituum certum reddatur; a quo denique divina potius consilia requiruntur, quam ab illo cui credita est dispensatio mysteriorum Dei? Ipsum proinde quem pro Deo habemus, tanquam Deum in his quae aperte non sunt contra Deum, audire debemus.’ Haec ille, qui in toto eo tractatu per angelum Domini exercituum, per sacerdotem cujus labia scientiam custodiunt, per vicarium Dei, per dispensatorem mysteriorum Dei, non alium intelligit quam praepositum monasterii. Tametsi enim haec nomina praecipue ad episcopos maximeque ad Petri successorem pertinent, tamen suo modo conveniunt etiam illis, quibus secundum evangelicum Christi consilium et Ecclesiae consuetudinem ac Sedis Apostolicae confirmationem, ex voto, ad obedientiam obstringimur. Quae cum ita sint, nullum peccandi periculum incurrit qui in rebus dubiis praelato suo obedit, siquidem is, ubi rationes dubitationis suae praelato suo exposuit, illius judicio acquiescit, conscientiamque deponit et ei fidem habet cui fidem habere debet ; et si forte fallitur, ex ignorantia invincibili fallitur.

Sed alia fieri posset objectio : perfecta enim illa obedientia antiquis temporibus et fervori primorum illorum Regularium satis conveniebat ; at nunc alia tempora et mutati hominum mores aliud forte requirere videantur. — Caeterum haec objectio tunc fortasse locum haberet, si initio nascentis Ecclesiae, obedientiae hujus perfectio a sanctis viris commendata, saeculis succedentibus, a religionum fundatoribus neglecta vel repudiata fuisset. Sed cum initio per S. Antonium atque Macharium, deinde per magnum Basilium, tum per sanctos Patres Hieronymum et Augustinum, postea per Cassianum, Climacum, Caesarium, sanctum Benedictum, sanctumque Gregorium, proximis denique saeculis per sanctos viros Bernardum, Franciscum, Bonaventuram, Umbertum praedicata atque ab omnibus ordinibus religiosis probata fuerit, non video cur suspicandum sit, eam in haec tempora nostra non convenire. Deinde si vitae asperitas, altissima paupertas, silentii disciplina, orandi assiduitas, aliaeque religiosae virtutes, in nonnullis religiosis ordinibus, non minus hoc nostro saeculo laudantur, quam antiquis temporibus laudarentur : nulla ratio est cur non etiam obedientiae exactissimae observatio commendari debeat, cum obedientia primum locum in institutis regularibus teneat, ut post omnes veteres Patres docuit sanctus Thomas in 2^{a} 2^{ae} quaest. 186, art. 8.

At periculosa videtur obedientia caeca, cum si ita simpliciter religiosi praepositis suis credant, facile fieri possit, ut praepositus errores aliquos doceat, et occasione obedientiae disseminentur ac propagentur haereses. — Sed si periculum hoc metuitur ab obedientia religiosorum, multo magis metuendum erit ab obedientia simplicium populorum, qui parochos vel episcopos suos audiunt, cum ex loco superiore concionantur ;

quamvis enim non voverint populi obedientiam parochis vel episcopis, tenentur tamen obedire praepositis suis eisque subjacere, ut Apostolus monet Heb. 13. Et velint nolint obedientiam caecam eisdem in his quae manifesta non sunt, exhibere coguntur ; neque enim discernere possunt homines rudes, verumne an falsum, justum an injustum sit, quod parochi vel episcopi docent. Ac fieri quidem posset, ut episcopus vel parochus aliquis, clam haereticus factus, populum seducere et haereses suas propagare tentaret ; sed non permitteret Deus aut pastorum aliorum vigilantia, ut is error diu lateret, patefactus autem continuo Apostolicae Sedis judicio damnaretur. Caeterum etiam si alicubi, Deo permittente, populus pastori suo facile credens seduceretur non ideo tamen catholicus ullus docere auderet dehortandos esse populos ab obedientia praelatorum, ac persuadendos ut ipsi se judices pastorum suorum facerent et doctrinam ac jussa majorum discuterent ; siquidem periculum longe majus haeresum novarum timendum esset ex hac libertate, ut hodie inter Lutheranos, quorum est propria ista libertas, accidere videmus, quam unquam timendum fuerit ex obedientia simplici populorum. Est autem longe minus periculum seductionis in ordinibus religiosis, ubi plurimi sunt viri docti, quam in paroeciis popularibus, ubi saepe numero nullus est peritus, praeter unum parochum. Quare si plebeii homines in his quae ad Deum pertinent, simpliciter credere pastoribus suis debent iisque obedire ac subjacere, multo magis religiosi debent praepositis suis perfectam simplicemque atque adeo caecam obedientiam in iis quae manifeste contra Dei legem non pugnant, exhibere.

ROB. BELLARMINUS.

IV

DE OFFICIO PRIMARIO SUMMI PONTIFICIS

Ad Clementem VIII. Pontificem Maximum

[*Vide Supra*, pp. 448–452.]

Summus Pontifex triplicem gerit in Ecclesia Dei personam: est enim pastor et rector Ecclesiae universae, episcopus Urbis Romae proprius, et princeps temporalis ecclesiasticae ditionis. Sed inter omnia ejus officia primum locum tenet sollicitudo omnium ecclesiarum: hoc enim est primum, singulare, maximum. Primum quidem, quoniam Apostolus Petrus multo ante factus est pastor totius dominici gregis, quam episcopus Antiochenus vel Romanus. Singulare autem, quoniam multi sunt alii episcopi nobilissimarum civitatum, multi quoque principes temporales; sed Pontifex orbis terrarum, Christi Vicarius generalis, pastor universalis Ecclesiae solus ipse est. Denique maximum, quia episcopatus Urbis Romae suos habet limites, eosque satis angustos, ut est principatus ecclesiae temporalis; at Summus Pontifex nullos habet in orbe terrarum limites, nisi quos ipse orbis terrarum habet.

Porro officium hoc tam antiquum, tam magnum, tam singulare, tam proprium sibi, tam necessarium Ecclesiae, facile poterit ipse Summus Pontifex implere, si ecclesiis singulis bonos episcopos praeficiat, eosque suo muneri satisfacere curet, et, si opus sit, cogat; siquidem boni episcopi bonos eligent parochos, bonos concionatores, bonos confessarios. Itaque animarum salus, nisi per ipsos steterit, in tuto erit. Ac si forte negligentia episcoporum vel parochorum aliquae pereant, sanguis earum de manu pastorum particularium requiretur, Summus autem Pontifex animam suam liberabit, quippe qui fecit quod suum erat, ne perirent; sin autem Summus ipse Pastor ecclesiis particularibus, vel episcopos dederit minus bonos, vel ut ii fungerentur munere suo, non diligentem operam dederit, tunc sane animarum illarum sanguis de manu Pontificis Maximi requiretur. Id concilium Tridentinum, Sess. 24, cap. 1, his verbis monet: ‘ Postremo eadem sancta Synodus tot gravissimis Ecclesiae incommodis commota non potest non commemorare nihil magis Ecclesiae Dei esse necessarium, quam ut Beatissimus Romanus Pontifex, quam sollicitudinem universae Ecclesiae ex muneris sui officio debet, eam hic potissimum impendat, ut lectissimos tantum sibi Cardinales adsciscat, et bonos maxime atque idoneos pastores singulis ecclesiis praeficiat; idque eo magis, quod ovium Christi sanguinem, quae ex malo negligentium et sui officii immemorum pastorum regimine peribunt, Dominus Noster Jesus Christus de manibus ejus sit requisiturus.'

Haec me consideratio ita vehementer exterret, ut nulli hominum magis ex animo compatiar quam Summo Pontifici, cui plerique omnes invidere solent. Quod enim sanctus Joannes Chrisostomus, homil. 3 in Acta Apostolorum, magno cum animi sensu scribit, paucos ex episcopis salvari, propterea quod difficillimum sit tot animarum sibi creditarum bonam rationem reddere, multo magis in Summis Pontificibus locum habere dubitari non potest. Neque blandiri nobis debemus de bona conscientia, de recta intentione, de sanctis operibus, cum Apostolus Paulus dicat: *Nihil mihi conscius sum, sed non in hoc justificatus sum;* et Apostolus Jacobus terreat nos illa formidolosa sententia: *Quicunque totam legem servaverit, offendat autem in uno, factus est omnium reus.* Unum autem, in quo facillime peccatur et difficillime remedium adhibetur, est hoc de quo agimus. Quare fretus Apostolica benignitate, deponam in sinum pientissimi Patris, seu potius ad pedes ejus scrupulos meos, qui me, ut verum fatear, quiescere non sinunt.

A. Hoc quoque nos terret, sed cum corda hominum soli Deo pateant, nec possimus nos nisi homines eligere, duo exempla aliquando nos consolantur. Primum, quando Dominus noster Jesus Christus elegit duodecim Apostolos, praevia pernoctatione in oratione, quod nescimus an in alia electione fecerit, et nihilominus inter illos electos unus fuit Judas. Aliud exemplum est, quando duodecim Apostoli pleni omnes Spiritu Sancto, septem elegerunt diaconos, inter quos unus fuit Nicolaus, tam insignis haereticus; quae exempla pro sua infinita bonitate putamus Deum omnipotentem pro consolatione eligentium in Ecclesia reliquisse.

Videntur igitur mihi sex quaedam res esse, quae reformatione indigeant, nec sine periculo negligantur.

Prima res est diuturna vacatio ecclesiarum; de qua re extat epistola sancti Leonis ad Anastasium episcopum Thessalonicensem, in qua jubet sine mora provideri ecclesiis, ne gregi Domini diu desit cura pastoris. Extat etiam decretum Innocentii III in titulo de Elect, ubi dicitur: 'Ne pro defectu pastoris gregem dominicum lupus rapax invadat, aut facultatibus suis ecclesia viduata grave dispendium patiatur, volentes in hoc etiam occurrere periculis animarum, et ecclesiarum indemnitatibus providere, statuimus ut ultra tres menses cathedralis ecclesia vel regularis praelatio non vacet'; estque hoc decretum cum multis aliis maturo consilio in synodo generali amplissima confectum. Extant quoque plurimae apud sanctum Gregorium epistolae, in quibus admonentur ii ad quos spectat electio, quam citissime pastorem eligere; et si forte necessaria fuisset aliqua mora, consueverat idem Pontifex vacantem ecclesiam commendare vicino episcopo, non (ut fit hoc tempore) ad fructus percipiendos, sed ad sollicitudinem ejus ecclesiae interim gerendam. Itaque studebant sanctissimi illi prudentissimique Pontifices continuo vacantibus ecclesiis providere, ne rei efficerentur animarum, quas ob defectum pastoris perire contingeret: difficile enim esset paucis explicare, quantum detrimenti capiant ecclesiae viduatae; in quae vitiorum abrupta se grex praecipitet dum caret pastore; quantum silvescat vinea Domini, dum caret agricola.

B. In hac prima re sive in hoc primo capite, fatemur nos peccasse et peccare; sed plerumque in causa est difficultas inveniendi personas idoneas; et quamvis saepe multi nobis proponantur, cum per nos ipsi nequeamus sumere informationes, et aliquando experti simus illos quibus hanc curam demandavimus, nos vel decepisse, vel ipsos ab aliis deceptos fuisse, tutius aliquando putavimus memores sententiae B. Pauli, *Cito cuiquam manus non imponas*, differre, ne decipiamur; et tamen recordamur etiam tempore Magni Gregorii affuisse ecclesias quae diu vacarunt, et hac de causa ipsum solitum fuisse uni episcopo aliam commendare, ut interim curam illius haberet.

Secunda res est promotio minus utilium praelatorum; deberet enim provideri ecclesiis de bonis personis, non autem personis de bonis ecclesiis. Fateor quidem optimam illam esse provisionem, cum utrumque simul fieri potest, ut et personae bene merenti, et ecclesiae vacanti utiliter provideatur; sed prima et maxima ratio ecclesiae habenda est.

C. Scimus hoc, et quantum in nobis est, semper prae oculis habemus providere ecclesiis, non autem personis, nisi quando et ecclesiae et personae provideri aeque putamus.

Scribit enim sanctus Gregorius, lib. 6 in primum librum Regum, cap. 3, in aliis multis rebus salubrem esse dispensationem, sed ut indignus promoveatur ad episcopatum, non posse nisi mortiferam esse dispensationem. Et ipse idem sanctus Gregorius, lib. 2° Registr., cap. 68, dicit se ob metum peccandi in electione, omnino decrevisse non se admiscere in electionibus episcoporum. Ac (ut alia nunc praeteream) concilium Tridentinum, Sess. 24, cap. 1, disertis verbis affirmat, peccare mortaliter eos omnes, ad quos quocunque modo spectat episcoporum promotio, nisi eos praeficiendos curaverint, quos digniores et Ecclesiae magis utiles ipsi judicaverint, quae est communis Doctorum sententia.

D. Haec sententia vera est ; sed si de dignioribus est agendum, nunquam providebitur ecclesiae, quia nescimus modum, quem tenere possimus, ut sciamus, quis dignior sit.

Expavi, fateor, cum bis terve in sacro Concistorio vidi, ad episcopatus cardinalitios promoveri aliquos, qui, vel ob nimiam senectutem, vel ob magnam corporis debilitatem, vel ob defectum episcopalium virtutum tales erant, ut non modo non utiliores, sed vix utiles vel apti ad regendas animas judicari possent. — At consuetudo id postulat, ut antiquioribus presbiteris cardinalibus, quicunque illi sint, ecclesiae illae committantur. Non opinor ullam consuetudinem unquam effecturam esse ut corpora nostra curanda medicis antiquioribus committamus, si vel ob decrepitam aetatem, vel ob aliam causam minus idonei sint ad curandum ; quod ergo facimus ob salutem corporis temporalem, cur non faciemus ob salutem aeternam animarum ?

E. Quoad istos episcopatus inferius dicemus.

Omitto quod hoc tempore plurimi ambiunt episcopatus, vel potius non ambiunt, sed aperte quaerunt et efflagitant, nescientes omnino, ut Dominus ait, quid petant.

F. Hoc etiam torquet nos, quia si nolumus dare episcopatus petentibus vel iis qui nobis ab aliis proponuntur, nescimus quomodo poterimus ecclesiis providere, praesertim ecclesiis non ita magnis et parvi redditus ; et si D. V. scit aliquem modum, libenter audiremus et amplecteremur.

Si enim judicio etiam civilium legislatorum non est dignus sacerdotio, nisi qui ordinatur invitus, quomodo non erit indignus, qui ultro se ingerit ? Sanctus Gregorius, libro 6 in primum librum Regum, cap. ultimo, rectum ordinem esse dicit, ut quaerantur homines ad episcopatum, non ut quaerant homines episcopatum. Et sanctus Bernardus lib. 4 *de con-*

sideratione, cap. 5 : ‘ Qui pro se rogat, inquit, jam judicatus est’; et infra : ‘ Cunctantes et renuentes coge, et compelle intrare.’

G. Ista possunt dici, sed, cum ad praxim devenimus, in magnas incidimus difficultates.

Tertia res est absentia pastorum ab ecclesiis. Quid enim prodest idoneum eligi, si non resideat ? Ac ut vetera praetermittam, concilium Tridentinum, Sess. 23, cap. 1, declarat, praecepto divino teneri pastores animarum oves suas agnoscere, verbi divini praedicatione, sacramentorum administratione ac bonorum omnium operum exemplo pascere. Quae omnia implere non posse, qui gregi suo non assistunt, et per se notum est, et ab eodem concilio explicatum. Ex quo idem concilium colligit cardinales quoque, si forte episcopi sint ecclesiarum ab Urbe remotarum, teneri ad residentiam personalem in illis ecclesiis. Atque hoc est praecipuum, in quo vehementer timeo ne offendant ii ad quos pertinet dare operam ut episcopi resideant.

H. In hoc fatemur peccasse, quia nimis facile indulsimus episcopis, ut possint Romam venire, et difficillime Roma expelluntur.

Video enim in ecclesiis Italiae desolationem tantam, quanta ante multos annos fortasse non fuit, ut jam neque divini juris neque humani residentia esse videatur.

I. Antea si D. V. vult recordari, fortasse unus ut dicitur pro mille non residebat.

Primo numerantur hodie cardinales episcopi non residentes undecim : Gesualdus, Florentinus, Veronensis, Asculanus, Gallus, Boromeus, Senensis, Bandinus, Vicecomes, Tuschus, Ossatus.

K. Gesualdus occasione litium, et fortasse scit D. V., si magis expedit ut resideat, vel non. 3. Veronensis habet Coadjutorem. 4. Tractat de resignando et est Theologus. 5. Venit occasione anni sancti. 6. Scit D. V. turbas quas habet in sua dioecesi. 7. Infirmitas est in causa. 8. Residet, quia ecclesia est in provincia quam regit, et saepissime est in ecclesia. 9. Nunc redit ad ecclesiam, et paucos habet parochianos. 10. Tuschus residet, quia qualibet hebdomada potest esse Tiburi. 11. Ossatus ob negocia regis.

Secundo, plures adhuc numerantur episcopi, qui Nuntios Apostolicos agunt, quorum aliqui per annos multos ecclesias suas non viderunt.

Tertio, nonnulli relicto ministerio pascendi animas sibi creditas, magistratum politicum gerunt ; id qua ratione justificetur, ignorare me fateor. Nam Apostolus prohibet eos, qui Deo militant, implicari negociis saecularibus, et sanctus Gregorius, lib. 7 Registr., cap. ii, acriter reprehendit Basilium quemdam episcopum, qui veluti unus de laicis in causis forensibus et praetoriis occupabatur. Olim ex judicibus saeculi assumebantur aliqui ad solium episcopale, quod de Ambrosio, Nectario, Chrisostomo, Gregorio legimus ; quod vero ab episcopali fastigio descenderint aliqui ad politicum magistratum gerendum, apud veteres quod sciam non legitur ; nec immerito : quale enim est, ut quorum proprium munus est instare verbo et orationi, et quorum manus ad benedicendum consecratae sunt, ii satellitibus stipati, torquendis et necandis hominibus praesint ?

L. Quoad Nuntios, putamus decentissimum esse ut Nuntii sint episcopi, quia episcopis imperant, et majoris auctoritatis sunt apud principes et populos, et nisi tanta hominum penuria laboraretur, citius mutaremus. Quoad eos qui politicos magistratus gerunt, si agitur de his qui in statu ecclesiastico gerunt magistratus, non est in toto statu ecclesiastico nisi unus in Romandiola ; alter est episcopus Camerini prolegatus in provincia Marchiae, ita ut singulo die necdum singula hebdomada possit esse in sua ecclesia, et quasi singula hora in sua dioecesi.

Quarto, nonnulli relictis ovibus suis Romae vel inutiliter tempus terunt, vel iis in rebus occupantur quae per alios commode fieri possent. Fateor quidem aliquos episcopos a residentia per obedientiam excusari ; neque illud inficior, posse Summum Pontificem certis de causis atque ad tempus episcopos aliquos a residentia eximere ; sed nescio an Deo placeat, ut tantus numerus episcoporum, tam longo tempore, cum tanto animarum detrimento, a propriis ecclesiis absint, quos certe suo muneri satisfacere non posse perspicuum est. Nam si illi episcopi qui assidue resident et totis viribus in curam animarum incumbunt, neque suscipiunt alia tractanda negocia, vix tamen onus regiminis ferunt, et nimis cum ingenti periculo praesunt, ut de se sanctus Augustinus loquitur, lib. 10 *Confess.*, cap. 4, et notum est ex *Apologetico* sancti Gregorii Nazianzeni, ex dialog. sancti Joannis Chrisostomi *de sacerdotio*, ex libro pastorali sancti Gregorii, quomodo non falluntur ii, qui longe ab ovibus suis absunt, et alienis multis negociis implicantur, et tamen muneri suo episcopali se satisfacere posse confidunt ?

M. Revera non nisi Nuncios diu absentes retinemus, quorum mutatio ob magna et periculosa negocia facile fieri non potest.

Quarta res est polygamia spiritualis, cum videlicet uni personae plures ecclesiae committuntur. S. Bernardus in epistola ad comitem Theobaldum, rem totam tribus verbis absolvit, cum ait id non esse licitum, nisi dispensatorie ob magnam Ecclesiae necessitatem. S. Thomas, quodlibeto 9, art. 5, scribit, beneficiorum praesertim curatorum multiplicitatem non solum contrariam esse juri canonico, sed etiam juri naturae: non quod ita sit intrinsece mala ut nullo modo honestari possit, qualia sunt adulteria, mendacia et similia; sed quod absolute mala sit, possit tamen ob certas circumstantias honestari, ut ob Ecclesiae necessitatem. Ex quo colligit idem S. Thomas eum, qui ex dispensatione duas ecclesias habet, non esse tutum in conscientia, nisi causa illa adsit Ecclesiae necessitatis, vel saltem majoris utilitatis, quoniam dispensatio non tollit nisi vinculum juris positivi; et hanc sancti Thomae doctrinam omnes Theologi probant. Quare timendum est ne forte non sint in conscientia tuti, qui duas ecclesias habent, unam cardinalitiam, alteram non cardinalitiam; causa enim cur episcopis cardinalibus duae permittantur ecclesiae, non videtur esse necessitas vel utilitas Ecclesiae, sed major personae dignitas vel commoditas, quas causas sanctus Thomas omnino repudiat. Neque sufficienter excusari videntur ex eo quod unam ecclesiam in titulum, alteram in administrationem habere dicantur, vel quod hanc polygamiam spiritualem usus a multis annis introductus admittat; nam, ut omittam quod episcopi cardinales hodie non se administratores, sed episcopos utriusque ecclesiae dici volunt, certe concilium Tridentinum a S. Sede Apostolica approbatum, distinctionem illam nominum aperte rejicit, cum ait Sess. 7, cap. 2: ‘Nemini, quacumque dignitate fulgeat, duas cathedrales committi debere, neque in titulum, neque in commendam, neque alio quovis nomine’; et Sess. 24, cap. 17, duo beneficia praesertim curata ne ipsis quidem cardinalibus concedit. Usum autem illum a multis annis introductum eadem Tridentina Synodus abrogavit, ut omittam quod ea quae mala sunt, nisi certa quaedam circumstantia adsit, nulla consuetudine bona fieri possunt, nisi circumstantia illa adsit.

N. Quoad istam polygamiam, ista non videtur nisi in istis sex episcopatibus cardinalitiis, circa quos nihil mutandum duximus cum a Praedecessoribus nostris etiam post concilium Tridentinum res haec examinata fuerit, et ita constituta; et turbare ordines

Collegii, et redarguere facta Praedecessorum nostrorum et tot cardinalium, non visa fuit nobis res quae sine scandalo fieri posset, quomodo cognoscet D. V. si mature super hoc considerabit.

Quinta res est facilis translatio episcoporum de una ecclesia ad aliam, quae maxime cernitur in sex episcopatibus cardinalitiis et in episcopatibus Hispaniae; translatio enim episcoporum secundum canones atque usum veteris Ecclesiae, non debet fieri, nisi ob Ecclesiae necessitatem vel majorem utilitatem; neque enim institutae sunt ecclesiae propter episcopos, sed episcopi propter ecclesias. Sanctus Gregorius, ut refert Joannes diaconus in ejus vita, lib. 3, cap. 18, neque ipse ullum episcopum ab ecclesia sua ad aliam transtulit, neque ab aliis transferri unquam assentiri voluit. Nunc autem quotidie translationes fieri videmus ea solum de causa, ut episcopi vel honore vel opibus augeantur. Praeterea notum est ex c. *Inter corporalia*, de translatione episcoporum, vinculum matrimonii spiritualis esse aliquo modo majus quam vinculum matrimonii corporalis, et propterea non posse solvi nisi a Deo, sive a Vicario Dei declarante voluntatem Domini sui; quis autem credat velle Deum ut vel ob solum temporale lucrum, vel honorem, vinculum hujus sancti conjugii dissolvatur? praesertim cum id sine detrimento animarum fieri nequeat, ut experimentum ipsum docet: neque enim episcopi ecclesias diligunt, quas brevi se deserturos sperant, ut ad alias commodiores transeant. Certe intra paucos menses misera Albanensis ecclesia quater mutavit episcopos, et ecclesiae sex cardinalitiae quae omnibus aliis dignitate praestant, cura et diligentia pastorali omnibus aliis cedunt, praesertim hoc tempore quo tres illarum sponsos habent polygamos, et in alterius sponsae ditioris amplexibus occupatos, tres vero reliquae sponsos habent ita confectos aetate vel morbis, ut de bona educatione filiorum, ne dicam generatione, omnino desperent.

Q. Nos cum difficultate transferimus. Quoad sex episcopatus cardinalitios, diximus supra. Quoad hispanos episcopatus, cogitet D. V. si nunc Regi haec facultas tolleretur, in quantas difficultates incideremus; circa tamen hoc non defuimus monere Regem per nos, et per Nunciūn nostrum.

Sexta res est episcopatuum resignatio sine legitima causa: nam si tam est arctum ac pene insolubile vinculum inter episcopum et ecclesiam, ut canones docent, unde fit ut tam facile vinculum istud quotidie resolvi videamus? Alii retentis fructibus ecclesiam resignant, ac si quis uxorem repudiet et dotem retineat. Alii divites ex redditibus ecclesiae jam effecti, renuntiant episcopatui, ut ad majora sibi viam aperiant. Alii nepotibus sedem renuntiant, ut specie renuntiationis possideant sanctuarium Dei. Alii malunt in Romana curia referendarii esse vel clerici, quam extra curiam sacerdotes magni. Alii denique causantur aeris insalubritatem, alii proventus exiguos, alii populi proterviam. Sed Deus novit, an istae justae sint causae resignationis, et utrum episcopi ejusmodi quaerant quae sua sunt, an quae Jesu Christi.

P. Nos resignationes difficillime admittimus, et regulariter non nisi examinatis causis in Congregatione rerum consistorialium, et aliquando admittimus ob ineptitudinem resignantium.

Haec sunt, Beatissime Pater, quae mihi hoc tempore suggerenda Sanctitati Vestrae esse videbantur, ut conscientiam meam hac in parte exonerarem ; quae sicut a me sincero animo scripta sunt, ita benigno vultu, ut a Beatitudine Vestra legantur, cum omni reverentia et demissione etiam atque etiam precor.

Sanctitatis Vestrae Servulus.

ROB. CARD. BELLARMINUS.

Q. Haec paucula ita cursim diximus non ad excusandas excusationes in peccatis, sed ut ipsa potius misereatur difficultatibus, quibus impliciti in has aerumnas incidimus ; fatemur enim, nedum in istis, sed in aliis multis, imo omnibus peccasse, et in nulla re muneri nostro satisfecisse nec satisfacere. Roget igitur Deum omnipotentem, vel quod sua divina et efficacissima gratia nobis opituletur, vel, quod magis optamus, nos ab hoc mortali vinculo absolvat, aliumque subroget quo omnibus numeris officium sibi injunctum absolvat.

V

DE RATIONE FORMANDAE CONCIONIS

[*Vide Supra*, pp. 77–79.]

I. Finis christiani concionatoris esse debet docere fideliter quae populum oporteat vel deceat scire ex doctrina divina, et simul movere ad virtutes consequendas et vitia fugienda.

II. Quare necesse est ut qui est concionaturus, primum omnium sibi praefigat scopum quo dirigat totam suam actionem et singulas ejus partes ; v. g. dicere debet apud se : Evangelium hodiernum hortatur ad poenitentiam ; volo igitur dare operam, Deo juvante, ut in animis auditorum ingenerem desiderium verae poenitentiae, ac propterea colligam rationes, utilitates, exempla et alia quae ad hunc finem obtinendum juvabunt. Pari ratione examinare deberet singulas partes suae concionis, et videre an ad finem propositum faciant. Hinc enim multi non modo inutiliter, sed etiam cum periculo animarum suarum concionantur, qui nullum sibi scopum proponunt nisi consumendi unam horam dicendo, et partim argutis sententiis, partim varietate rerum et verborum delectando auditores. Isti enim ut finem verum non habent propositum, ita etiam non assequuntur, licet multum fatigentur et sudent.

III. Ad docendum, qui est unus ex finibus concionatoris, non satis est de singulis Evangelii vocibus aliquid dicere vel ex singulis conceptus, ut vocant, quosdam elicere, ut quidam faciunt, qui non verbum Dei, sed verba sua praedicant ; sed necesse est verum germanum et litteralem sensum eruere, et inde dogmata fidei confirmare vel praecepta vivendi tradere, ac breviter id docere quod Spiritus Sanctus per ea verba doceri voluit. Id enim vere est populum pascere et instruere verbo Dei. Qui autem Patres pro Scripturae expositione legendi sint, ex meo Catalogo peti posset. Ex recentioribus Cornelius Jansenius et Adamus Sasbout excellere mihi videntur.

IV. Ad movendum ad studium virtutum, qui est alter finis concionatoris, non satis est irasci in peccatores et vociferari ; inanes enim clamores terrent aliquando simpliciores, sed ridentur a sapientioribus, et certe in neutris solidum fructum operantur. Itaque necesse est solidis rationibus, quae ducuntur a testimoniis divinis, a causis et effectibus rerum de quibus agitur, et potissimum ab exemplis et appositis similibus convincere primum mentem auditorum, ut fateri cogantur ita esse vivendum ut concionator dicit ; ac tum verborum copia et efficacia et variis exclamationibus impellendi sunt auditores ut velint serio id quod velle se debere cognoverunt. Ad ejusmodi rationes et exempla invenienda, plurimum juvare possunt digressiones S. Joannis Chrysostomi in Epistolas S. Pauli, et sermones ejusdem *ad populum Antiochenum ;* sermones S. Basilii *de Jejunio* et sequentes ; sermones S. Augustini *in Psalmos*, sermones *de verbis Domini* et *de verbis Apostoli*, et aliae ejusdem homiliae ; *dialogi* S. Gregorii, et historiae omnes ecclesiasticae, ac potissimum de vitis sanctorum libri, qui scripti sunt ab Athanasio, Sulpicio, Hieronymo, Palladio, Theodoreto, Beda et aliis.

V. Tria sunt necessaria ei qui utiliter concionari velit : zelus Dei sive spiritus et fervor caritatis, sapientia et eloquentia, quae tria significabant linguae igneae, quae super Apostolos apparuerunt, cum a Deo crearentur concionatores primi evangelici ; ardor ignis zelum, splendor sapientiam, forma linguae eloquentiam designabant. Eloquentia sine caritate et sapientia est cymbalum tinniens et inanis garrulitas. Sapientia et eloquentia sine caritate est res plane humana et mortua. Caritas sine sapientia et eloquentia est instar viri fortis, sed inermis.

VI. Ad zelum seu spiritum hauriendum, cui potissimum studere debet christianus concionator, nihil magis prodest quam oratio ad Deum assidua et rerum coelestium continua et seria cogitatio.

VII. Ad sapientiam concionatori necessariam tria requiruntur. Primo cognitio Scripturarum ; et ideo deberet ecclesiastes quotidie aliquid legere ex divina Scriptura, ut eam sibi faceret valde familiarem, et simul consulere Patrum commentaria. Secundo requiritur notitia dogmatum ecclesiasticorum, in quo genere tutissima est doctrina S. Thomae et Catechismi Tridentini ; neque recte faciunt qui populo opiniones Doctorum de dogmatibus proponunt : neque enim parum esset si populus quae certa sunt plane intelligere et capere posset. Tertio requiritur varia eruditio, ut habeat exemplorum et rationum copiam, quae ex historiis et libris Patrum petitur.

VIII. Ad eloquentiam christianam, imo ad omnem veram eloquentiam requiritur ut ars emendet et poliat, sed non destruat aut corrumpat naturam. Atque in hac una re praecipue peccari solet. Debet ars emendare naturam, quia nonnulli interdum vel educatione vel aliunde vitiose loquuntur et agunt ; ut cum verbis utuntur impropriis vel minus honestis, vel phrasibus obscuris, et cum caput indecore movent aut manu sinistra gestus faciunt, aut aliter peccant in agendo. Quae vitia facile notari et caveri possunt et debent. Debet rursus, ut dixi, ars non destruere naturam ; et si peccata aliqua toleranda sint, minus malum est non emendari quam destrui naturam. Destruunt naturam qui, dum concionantur, vel tono vocis utuntur insolito, ut non loqui, sed recitare, vel canere videantur ; vel verbis utuntur poeticis aut nimis affectatis ; vel certe phrasibus ita concinnis ut omnes intelligant eum multum laborasse in componenda oratione. Ista enim detrahunt concionatori omnem pene auctoritatem.

IX. Si quis velit hoc vitium fugere, cogitare debet se licet ex loco altiore et ad multos, tamen cum singulis hominibus collocuturum, et cum eis ita acturum ac si seorsum cum singulis ageret. Qui enim cum uno aliquo loquitur, ut ei aliquid persuadeat, certe non utitur initio multis epithetis nec poetica phrasi nec voce inusitata nec motu membrorum, sed plane more humano, primum quieto corpore, voce moderata et sententiis simplicibus ; deinde si opus sit contendere vel reprehendere, extollit vocem, multiplicat verba, agitat corpus, exclamat, etc., ut mutatione vocis et commotione membrorum pariat affectus, non affectatione aut artificio. Hoc solum interesse deberet inter orationem concionatoris ad populum et collocutionem familiarem unius ad alterum, quod concionatori, ut commode exaudiatur, est et altius loquendum, et etiam gravius, et magis considerate, ob honorem multitudinis ; multitudo enim honorabilis est.

X. Tria sunt genera concionum apud SS. Patres in usu : quidam enim Scripturas ordine pro concione exponunt et diligenter sententias singulas explanant. Tales sunt tractatus S. Augustini *in Job*, Basilii *in Hexameron*, Chrysostomi *in Genesim ;* atque hi nullum alium finem propositum habent quam docendi : affectus enim obiter solum et breviter admiscent. Alii toti sunt in locis communibis tractandis, ut sermones Chrysostomi *ad populum Antiochenum*, sermones Basilii diversorum argumentorum, et plerique sermones Augustini, Leonis et aliorum Patrum ; et hi potissimum affectibus movendis inserviunt. Alii denique partim Scripturas exponunt, partim digrediuntur ad virtutes commendandas et vitia detestanda; quod insigniter praestat Chrysostomus in homiliis *ad Epistolas Pauli*, et quamvis brevius, *in Matthaeum*, *Job* et *Acta Apostolorum*. Idem etiam fecit Augustinus *in Psalmos* post trigesimum. Haec tria genera utilia sunt et merito frequentanda. Quartum invexerunt nonnulli, qui scholasticas quaestiones in concione pertractant; et quintum alii, qui exquisitis verbis et rhetoricis flosculis vel historias evangelicas narrant, vel crimina pharisaeorum amplificant, vel de rebus subtilibus disputant, vel de aliis ejusmodi rebus inepto artificio, magno labore et sine ulla utilitate dicunt.

Exstant libri insignes de rhetorica ecclesiastica sive de formandis concionibus, Augustini cardinalis Veronensis, Didaci Stellae, Aloysii Granatensis, Alphonsi Zorillae et aliorum, ex quibus peti possunt praecepta in particulari de singulis partibus concionis.

VI

SENTENTIA ROBERTI BELLARMINI PRO IMMACULATA CONCEPTIONE SANCTISSIMAE VIRGINIS MARIAE

De conceptione Beatae Virginis duo dicam :
1° An sit definibilis quaestio de conceptione ;
2° An expediat illam nunc definire.

DE PRIMO

Prima Propositio. *Non potest definiri sententiam communiorem esse haereticam.*

Probatur, quia Ecclesia sive Sedes Apostolica definivit contrarium. Sixtus enim IV in Extravag. *Grave nimis*, expresse definit eos qui dicunt haereticum esse dicere B. Virginem sine peccato originali esse conceptam, falsum dicere, et excommunicat illos excommunicatione reservata summo Pontifici.

Potest confirmari haec definitio ex eo quod multo ante Sixti tempora quidam Joannes de Montesono praedicaverat esse haereticam sententiam dicere B. Virginem sine peccato originali fuisse conceptam, et haec ejus sententia fuit reprobata ab Academia Parisiensi, ut patet ex scripto adjuncto ad Magistrum ; et eamdem reprobavit Papa Clemens VII, qui in schismate sedebat Avenione, ut testatur Robertus Gaguinus, l. ix *Historiae Francorum*, quamvis ipse erret in nomine, vocans Innocentium, qui vere dicebatur Clemens. Ista definitio Clementis et Scholae parisiensis habet aliquam vim, sed non plenam ; ideo nos nitimur Decretali Sixti IV indubitati Pontificis, et quae est in corpore Juris.

Hinc sequitur errare illos qui dicunt sententiam communem esse contra Scripturam et Patres. Quod enim Sedes Apostolica definivit, non potest esse contra Scripturam et Patres, sed oportet eos qui hoc dicunt, non intelligere Scripturam neque Patres ; et nos habemus etiam multos Patres.

Secunda Propositio. *Non potest definiri sententiam contrariam esse haereticam.*

Hanc teneo probabilius, non praejudicans aliorum judicio.

Probatur. Quia fides catholica, cui contraria est haeresis, dependet a revelatione facta Ecclesiae per Prophetas et Apostolos, sive per Scripturam, sive per Traditionem, sive per declarationem Scripturae ab Ecclesia in conciliis aut communi sensu omnium Patrum. Sed in Scripturis nihil habemus neque in Traditione de Conceptione Virginis immaculata. In contrarium aliquid habemus, saltem in genere, in Scripturis ; et tamen hoc non sufficit, ut diximus.

Tertia Propositio. *Non potest definiri quod sententia communior non sit tenenda ut pia, sed ab omnibus rejicienda ut temeraria et scandalosa.*

Probatur, quia hoc esset dicere quod Sedes Apostolica erraverit in approbando officio Conceptionis et tota Ecclesia erraverit in eo recipiendo ; quod certe falsissimum et erroneum est.

Neque potest responderi quod in officio Conceptionis non approbatur conceptio corporalis immaculata, sed sanctificatio in utero post animationem. Nam Sixtus IV qui approbavit officium, declaravit animum suum, tum in Extrav. *Grave nimis*, quae nunc est in corpore Juris, tum in approbando officium Leonardi de Nogarolis, in cujus collecta dicitur, ‘ Virginem per merita Christi praevisa praeservatam ab omni macula.’ Praeterea in responsorio nono dicitur *sancta* Conceptio ; at non est conceptio nisi in illo primo instanti, in quo infusa est anima corpori, in quo coepit esse in rerum natura persona integra Virginis. Alioquin si accipiatur conceptio pro sanctificatione post animationem, etiam Hieremias et Joannes Baptista dicentur concepti sine peccato originali. Denique communis sensus fidelium est celebrari Conceptionem solius Virginis, quia ipsa sola vere concepta fuit sine peccato originali.

At inquies : Pius V mutavit officium proprium de Conceptione, et jussit fieri sicut de Nativitate. Respondeo : Pius V non sustulit officium proprium de Conceptione, adhuc enim a Fratribus Minoribus recitatur ; sed ad tollendam multiplicitatem officiorum in Ecclesia romana, jussit fieri sicut de Nativitate, mutato nomine ; ac proinde approbavit et voluit esse aequale officio Nativitatis. Adde quod si hoc argumentum valeret, sequeretur sublatum esse officium Visitationis et Praesentationis.

Quarta Propositio. *Potest definiri Conceptionem Virginis sine* *peccato originali esse recipiendam ab omnibus fidelibus ut piam et sanctam, ita ut nulli deinceps liceat contrarium sentire vel dicere sine temeritate et scandalo et suspicione haeresis.*

Probatur ratione ducta ab Scriptura et Patribus generatim. Nam Scripturae loca per se sumpta non extant clara, et Patres inveniuntur varii, cum et nos et adversarii multa adducant. Sic igitur formo rationem: Scriptura clare testatur Beatam Virginem esse veram Dei Matrem, Luc ii: *Ecce concipies et paries;* et Patres multi dicunt, et nulli contradicunt, B. Virgini, quia Mater Dei est, convenire dignitatem et eminentiam sanctitatis et gratiae super omnem puram creaturam. Chrysostomus in Liturgia, et Theodoretus in Cantica dicunt B. Virginem esse puriorem et honoratiorem quam Cherubim et Seraphim. Sanctus Gregorius in primum caput libri primi Regum dicit B. Virginem esse montem in vertice montium, quia merita sua erexit super omnes sanctos et super omnes angelos, etc. Sanctus Anselmus in lib. *de conceptu originali*, c. xviii: 'Decuit, inquit, Virginem ea puritate nitere, qua major sub Deo nequeat intelligi.' Sanctus Augustinus, *De natura et gratia*, c. xxxvi dicit: 'Cum de peccatis agitur, se nolle de B. Virgine ullam habere quaestionem.' Denique nullus negat B. Virgini nullum privilegium negandum, modo sit possibile purae creaturae, et non sit contra privilegia Christi. Certum est autem possibile esse puram creaturam habere gratiam in ipso primo instanti creationis; id enim contigit angelis, in quibus Deus simul fuit condens naturam et largiens gratiam, ut dicit sanctus Augustinus, l. xii *de civitate Dei*, c. I; et idem dicunt scholastici de Adam et Eva.

Praeterea possibile est puram creaturam carere omni peccato; tales sunt omnes angeli boni. Ergo debet hoc tribui Virgini Deiparae, quae est purior omnibus angelis; alioquin erit impurior omnibus angelis saltem quoad remotionem omnis culpae. Vera enim puritas dicit duo: remotionem a peccato, et approximationem ad Deum, qui est infinita puritas.

At, inquiunt, hoc est contra Scripturam, ad Rom. v: *In quo omnes peccaverunt*. Respondeo. Fatemur Virginem peccasse in Adamo, quando erat in lumbis Adae, et ut loquitur sanctus Augustinus, l. I *de baptismo parvulorum*, c. x, quando omnes in illo unus homo fuerunt, non quando extitit in persona sua; et quia peccavit in Adam, in se quoque peccatum habuisset, nisi per gratiam praeservata fuisset.

At, inquiunt, non erit Christus redemptor omnium, si B. Virgo non habuit peccatum originale, quod est contra Paulum, II Corinth. v: *Christus pro omnibus mortuus est, ergo omnes mortui sunt.* Respondeo B. Virginem esse mortuam morte peccati, de jure, non de facto, quia debuisset mori, sed praeservata est ex meritis Christi; proinde liberata est nobiliore modo; quo modo ille, qui damnatus est ad mortem, et antequam perveniat ad patibulum liberatur. Tales locutiones sunt in Scriptura, Gen. ii: *Quocumque die comederis, morte morieris;* id est, de jure, non de facto. Et Ps. lxxxv: *Eruisti animam meam de inferno inferiori;* id est, eruisti, quia fecisti ut non caderem in infernum inferiorem. Et ad Rom. viii: *Corpus, quod propter peccatum mortuum est*, id est morti obnoxium.

Potest addi alia ratio a simili; nam instituendo Nativitatem, Praesentationem et Assumptionem celebrari, sine licentia sentiendi contrarium, definita sunt ista mysteria, et temerarius esset qui ea negaret; ergo potest definiri etiam Conceptio, tollendo licentiam concessam. Nulla enim est ratio cur potuerint illa definiri, et hoc non possit; nam de illis nullum habemus testimonium Scripturae, neque perpetuam traditionem, neque testimonia Patrum, nisi aliqua pauca, et temporis posterioris.

DE SECUNDO

Dico expedire definire, imo necessarium id nunc fieri.

Sed quia objici solet, quod in Actis Concilii legitur Patres tridentinos tractasse de hac re, et tandem noluisse definire; et in concilio Florentino videtur petita definitio a Joanne de Turrecremata, postea Cardinali, et in concilio Lateranensi sub Leone X a Cardinali Cajetano, et tamen non fuit facta; ego puto tractatum esse tunc de definitione fidei, de qua ego non tracto. Sed si forte non placet nunc ulla formalis definitio, saltem deberet fieri praeceptum omnibus ecclesiasticis saecularibus et regularibus, ut recitarent officium de Conceptione, quo modo recitat Ecclesia; sic enim sine definitione haberetur intentum.

Quod autem vel definitio vel praeceptum sit hoc tempore expediens vel necessarium, probatur.

Primo. Quia remedium aliquod ad tollenda scandala est necessarium, et nullum efficacius hoc. Quod sit necessarium patet, quia Ecclesia est unum corpus, habet unum caput, unum spiritum; et tamen in ipsis pulpitis in hac materia unus dicit sic, alius non, quasi Ecclesia sit monstrum cum duabus linguis. Et quod nullum sit remedium efficacius patet. Nam in Gallia et Germania, quia ibi recepta est definitio concilii Basileensis, nulla fuit ab eo tempore contentio, ut etiam videmus accidisse in multis controversiis, quae sunt definita in concilio Tridentino de habitibus virtutum et gratiae, de certitudine gratiae, de matrimonio clandestino et aliis quae statim quieverunt. At in Italia et Hispania sunt continuae rixae de Conceptione, quia res non est definita.

Secundo. Quia nullum est remedium facilius. Nam antiquis temporibus litigabant provinciae cum provinciis. Prima coepit Anglia celebrare hoc festum, sed opposuit se Gallia, ut patet ex epistolis Petri de Cellis et Nicolai monachi sancti Albani. Deinde Gallia Lugduni accepit hoc festum, sed opposuit se sanctus Bernardus ex Burgundia, objiciens quod Romana Ecclesia non celebrabat; quod etiam fuit argumentum sancti Thomae, quod videlicet Ecclesia festum hoc tolerabat tantum, sed non celebrabat. At nunc Romana Ecclesia celebrat, et omnes ecclesiae mundi illam sequuntur. Nec solum Ecclesia latina sed etiam graeca celebrat, ut patet ex *Nomocanone* Photii et ex *Menologio* Graecorum. Nec solum celebrat tota Ecclesia hoc festum, sed etiam desiderant definiri illi apud quos non est controversia definita, ut Hispani et Itali. Adde quod, nisi Sixtus IV dedisset licentiam aliter opinandi, jam esset quaestio definita. Nam, ut dicit S. Augustinus in Epist. cxviii: 'Si quid horum per orbem frequentat Ecclesia, quin ita faciendum sit disputare insolentissimae insaniae est.' Itaque facillima nunc est definitio, quia solum requiritur et desideratur, ut tollatur illa licentia; si enim illa abesset, non esset opus definitione, quia per se res esset definita.

Tertio. Quia hoc tempore videtur necessaria definitio vel praeceptum quod dixi, quia nunquam licentia loquendi progressa est ultra terminos modestiae, ut modo, si vera sint quae in Informationibus missa sunt ex Hispania. In secunda Informatione habemus dixisse aliquos debere Inquisitores examinare opinionem quae dicitur pia, quia per eamdem viam intraverunt Lutherus et Calvinus. In quinta habetur aliquos dixisse quod si Papa definiret opinionem piam, adhuc esset falsa et mendacium. In decima octava habetur aliquos dixisse quod docere credendam opinionem piam de Conceptione Virginis est docere modum evadendi haereticum. In vigesima prima habetur aliquos dixisse Papam non potuisse concedere ut celebraretur festum Conceptionis, nec dare Indulgentias pro tali festo, et quod est facere idololatrare; et quod dicere Virginem fuisse conceptam sine peccato est haeresis. In vigesima secunda habetur aliquos dixisse se velle salvari in fide Ecclesiae veteris, quia quod nunc docetur de Conceptione Virginis est haeresis. Ecce quam latam portam aperuit illa licentia, quae si non fuisset data, nil horum audiremus ; proinde claudenda est haec porta tollendo licentiam.

Quarto. Quia hoc tempore Deus invitat miraculis, de infante canente laudes Conceptionis, de navibus salvis, excepta illa quae non habuit signum Conceptionis, de episcopo morte repentina defuncto in Indiis.

Quinto. Quia rex catholicus et tota Hispania summe hoc desiderent, neque ulli fiet res ingrata, exceptis paucis religiosis qui audita definitione omnino quiescent.

Sexto et ultimo. Quia nullum aliud apparet remedium sufficiens, nisi forte imponatur aeternum silentium uni parti vel utrique. At hoc est valde inconveniens et non durabile. Nam si imponatur silentium uni parti, fiet illi injuria, si res non definiatur, et semper poterit conqueri et renovare litem apud alium Pontificem, et semper observaret verba alterius partis et cavillaretur. Si imponatur silentium utrique parti, videbitur tacite utraque pars condemnata, et scandalum erit magnum quod non liceat praedicare publice id quod publice celebratur. Restat ergo ut una pars definiatur vel jubeatur ut pia et congruens officio ecclesiastico, et altera pars supprimatur ; sic enim pars illa non reclamabit, sed libenter obediet.

Sed respondendum est argumento principali Cajetani, quo nunc multi utuntur. Sancti Patres omnes communi consensu tenent B. Virginem conceptam fuisse in peccato originali ; at non est tutum relinquere sententiam omnium Patrum sanctorum, qui fuerunt magistri fidei nostrae : ergo sententia de immaculata conceptione non est tuta, nec est tenenda. Majorem probat auctoritate sancti Bonaventurae, qui in III Sentent., dist. iii, inter alia sic loquitur : ‘ Communiter sancti solum excipiunt Christum ab illa generalitate, qua dicitur, *Omnes peccaverunt in Adam.*’ Nullus demum invenitur dixisse Virginem Mariam fuisse ab originali immunem.

Ad hoc ego respondeo primo, non posse fieri ut omnes sancti fuerint nobis contrarii, nam sic nostra Ecclesia erraret, et Sixtus IV errasset. At Ecclesia nunquam errat, quia est columna et firmamentum veritatis, et contra quam portae inferi nunquam praevalebunt ; neque Pontifex errat, dum Ecclesiam docet, cum Christus pro illo oraverit ut non deficiat fides ejus.

Secundo. Dico sanctum Bonaventuram nullum Patrem sanctum citasse nisi sanctum Bernardum et sanctum Anselmum; neque poterat citare, quia paucissimos noverant illo tempore scholastici, qui Magistrum sequebantur, qui vix alios citat quam Augustinum, Ambrosium et Hilarium. Itaque verba illa Bonaventurae: 'Communiter sancti solum excipiunt Christum,' intelliguntur de paucis illis quos noverant tunc scholastici.

Tertio. Dico, quod verba eadem sancti Bonaventurae satis indicant eum loqui de sanctis, qui non expresse loquuntur de B. Virgine, sed solum in genere dicunt solum excipi Christum a peccato originis, quod est verum de iis qui ex vi conceptionis concipiuntur sine peccato originali. Sed inde non sequitur excipi non debere Virginem, quae non ex vi conceptionis, sed ex gratia Christi praeservata fuit. Itaque absolute negamus omnes sanctos antiquos esse contra nostram sententiam, imo vix unus aut alter invenietur; et nos habemus multos in contrarium. Ego vidi quos citat Joannes de Turrecremata, et quos Joannes Capreolus, et quos Cardinalis Cajetanus; et vix unum locum inveni qui convincat. Cardinalis Cajetanus, qui est ultimus, adducit decem Patres et quinque scholasticos; et de Patribus dicit se distincte posuisse nomina et loca et ipsa verba. Excutiam breviter loca dictorum Patrum.

Primo affert sanctum Augustinum *in Psalm. XXXIV*: 'Adam est mortuus propter peccatum, Maria ex Adam mortua est propter peccatum, caro Domini ex Maria mortua est propter delenda peccata.' Sed hic deest unum verbum; dicit enim sanctus Augustinus: Maria est mortua propter peccatum *Adae*, quia videlicet non propter suum peccatum, sibi inhaerens, sed propter peccatum Adae, ex quo omnes morti addicti sumus, etiam post peccatum deletum. Alium locum adducit ex libro II *de baptismo parvulorum*, c. xxiv: 'Solus, inquit, ille homo factus, manens Deus, peccatum nullum unquam habuit, nec sumpsit carnem peccati, quamvis de materna carne peccati.' Solus ille peccatum numquam habuit ex vi conceptionis, quia fuit conceptus de Spiritu Sancto; sed caro Virginis dici potest caro peccati, quia fuit obnoxia peccato ex natura sua, sed non obnoxia ex gratia. Nota hunc locum intelligi de peccatis actualibus.

Secundo. Sanctus Ambrosius, *serm. VI in Psalm. CXVIII*: 'Venit Dominus Jesus, et in carne quae peccato in matre fuerat obnoxia, militiam virtutis exercuit.' Illud *in matre* additum est, nec potuit ibi esse, quia non loquitur sanctus Ambrosius de Beata Virgine, sed de virginibus sanctimonialibus.

Tertio. Sanctus Joannes Chrysostomus, *in Matthaeum :* ‘ Quamvis Christus non esset peccator, naturam tamen humanam de peccatrice suscepit.’ Hic locus non invenitur nec potest inveniri, quia blasphemia esset dicere B. Virginem fuisse peccatricem ; peccatrix enim dicitur quae peccata actualia facit. Videtur locus desumptus ex Homilia xx, ubi dicitur Christum ex peccatricibus ortum habere, videlicet Raab, Thamar, Bethsabee, quae habentur in genealogia.

Quarto. Sanctus Eusebius Emissenus, *serm. II de Nativitate Domini :* ‘ A peccati originalis nexu nullus immunis existit, nec ipsa etiam Genitrix Redemptoris.’ Non fuit ullus talis sanctus ; Eusebius Emissenus fuit arianus. Iste sermo est auctoris incerti, et est corruptus, quia deest, *per se ;* sic enim legitur in auctore : ‘ A peccati originalis nexu nullus per se immunis existit, nec ipsa Genitrix Redemptoris.’ Fateor non esse immunem per se.

Quinto. Sanctus Remigius, *in Psalm. XXI :* ‘ B. Virgo fuit ab omni macula peccati mundata, ut ex ea conciperetur sine peccato homo Christus Jesus.’ Hic non est sanctus Remigius episcopus Remensis, sed est Remigius monachus sancti Benedicti ; et verba ejus intelligi debent de mundatione ab omni mala cogitatione, pro eo tempore quo Virgo concepit Christum ; desumpta sunt enim ex Beda.

Sexto. Sanctus Maximus, *serm. de Assumptione :* ‘ B. Virgo fuit in utero matris sanctificata ab omni contagione originalis culpae, antequam nasceretur.’ Hic sermo suppositițius est ; nam hic sermo non invenitur inter sermones Maximi Romae impressos, nec ponitur in numero sermonum sancti Maximi a Gennadio, nec tempore sancti Maximi celebrabatur festum Assumptionis, quod multo post incepit.

Septimo. Sanctus Beda in Homilia *super Missus est*, in illud, *Spiritus Sanctus superveniet in te :* ‘ Spiritus superveniens in Virginem ab omni vitiorum sorde castificavit.’ Loquitur Beda de conceptione Christi, et dicit in ea supervenisse Spiritum Sanctum in Virginem, ut nulla carnali cogitatione sordidaretur. Non loquitur de peccato originali, quo secundum omnes eo tempore carebat.

Octavo. Sanctus Anselmus, *Cur Deus homo*, l. II, c. xvi : ‘ Virgo in iniquitatibus concepta est, et in peccatis concepit eam mater sua.’ Loquitur auctor de initio conceptionis, in quo concipitur caro sive embrio. Explicat autem idem auctor in lib. *de conceptu virginali*, c. vii, dici contrahi peccatum originale, dum incipit caro formari, quia tunc acquiritur debitum habendi peccatum quando infundetur anima. Et si hoc non ita esset, auctor pugnaret secum, quia dicit ibidem, c. xviii, ‘ decuisse Virginem ea puritate nitere, qua major sub Deo nequeat intelligi.’

Nono. Sanctus Bernardus, in Epist. CLXXIV, *ad Lugdunenses :* ‘ B. Virgo post conceptionem in utero jam existens, sanctificationem accepisse creditur, quae excluso peccato, sanctam fecerit nativitatem, non conceptionem.’ Posset exponi de initio conceptionis carnis, ut diximus de Anselmo ; nam paulo infra dicitur : ‘ An forte inter amplexus maritales sanctitas se immiscuit, ut simul et sanctificata fuerit et concepta ? ’ Sed audiamus verba sancti Bernardi in fine : ‘ Quae, inquit, dixi, absque praejudicio dicta sint sanius sapientis, Romanae praesertim Ecclesiae, cujus auctoritati atque examini totum hoc, et caetera quae ejusmodi sunt universa, reservo ; ipsius, si quid aliter sapio, paratus judicio emendare.’

Decimo. Sanctus Erardus, episcopus et martyr : ‘ O felix puella, etc.’ Sed istum sanctum non habemus in Martyrologio, nec scimus quis sit. Omitto reliquos, quia non fuerunt ante ortam quaestionem, sed postea, et scholastici, non Patres.

Idem Cajetanus, c. v, adducit decretum concilii Florentini, in quo declaratum est contra decretum concilii Basileensis, solum Christum fuisse exemptum a peccato originali. Respondeo : in tomis Conciliorum antiquis non invenitur tale decretum, sed nuper positum est in Bullario sub nomine bullae Eugenii IV contra Jacobitas. Sed tempora non cohaerent ; nam concilium Florentinum finitum est anno 1439, et haec bulla dicitur facta anno 1442. Praeterea non dicitur in decreto illo quod solus Christus fuerit exemptus a peccato originali, sed quod solus Christus sua morte prostraverit hostem humani generis. Die ultima Augusti 1617.

In libro impresso sub nomine, *Manuale Fratrum Praedicatorum*, inclusus est alius liber vocatus *Chronica brevis ordinis Praedicatorum*, et in cap. xx ejus libri, circa finem, habentur haec verba : ‘ Quia ordo Praedicatorum solitus est sanctorum doctrinae adhaerere, sustinuit hucusque opinionem D. Hieronymi, Augustini, Ambrosii, Bernardi, Gregorii, Bonaventurae et aliorum sanctorum Doctorum, quod B. Virgo fuit concepta in originali. Sed jam de hoc non est curandum, cum sit materia nullius utilitatis et valde scandalosa ; praesertim cum tota fere Ecclesia, cujus usus et authoritas secundum D.

Thomam praevalet dicto Hieronymi et cujuscumque alterius doctoris, jam asserat quod fuit praeservata.'

Extat tractatus P. Vincentii Justiniani Antist, *De immaculata Conceptione B. Virginis*, in quo allegat multos auctores ordinis S. Dominici pro hac sententia ; et affirmat circa finem multos esse conventus Praedicatorum, in quibus celebratur cum magna solemnitate festum Conceptionis, et quod in Andalusia fit festum solemne Conceptionis cum octava, non obstante quod incidat in Adventu. Et addit quod litera cymbali principalis in illa domo est : *Maria Virgo ab omni peccato originali immunis fuit.*

Graeci celebrant festum Conceptionis immaculatae Virginis Mariae die nono decembris. Vide Theodorum Balsamonem in *Nomocanonem* Photii, tit. VII, qui est de jejuniis et festis diebus.

In conclusionibus impressis cujusdam Dominicani, quaestio proponitur : An vulgus habeat auctoritatem decidendi dubia de fide ? Hic titulus scandalosus est, quia praesupponit solum vulgus tenere Conceptionem immaculatam. At eam tenent episcopi, et omnes Doctores Universitatum, et omnes religiones, excepta parte Dominicanorum. Ibidem auctor dicit esse de fide sanctorum canonizationem ; at S. Thomas cum pluribus Dominicanis contrarium tenet. Denique doctrinam S. Thomae de matrimonio rato non consummato et de dispensatione voti solemnis Ecclesia Romana non tenet.

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